Sixty One MEDITATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS UPON The most Remarkable Passages and Circumstances of the late DREADFUL FIRE.

PART III.

BY
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One Hundred Meditations

Part III

To the Right Worſhipful

Sir JOHN LANGHAM,

Knight and Baronet.

Sir THOMAS PLAYER,

Knight,

And Chamberlain of the City of *London*.

AND TO

RICHARD HAMPDEN

of *Hampden* in the County of *Bucks*, Eſquire.

AND

To all his dear Friends, (and ſometime Paſtoral-charge,) the Inhabitants of *Thiſtleworth* in the County of *Middleſex*.

S. R.

Dedicateth this part of his Meditations, and wiſheth the Bleſſings of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.

To the Right Worship of

Knight and Baronet.

Knight,

of *Hampden* in the County of

To all his dear Friends, (and some-

Dedicateth this part of his Meditations, and wisheth the Blessings of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.

MEDITATIONS

Upon all the Remarkeable Paſſages and Circumſtances of the late dreadfull Fire.

MEDITATION I.

Of the Weight of Gods Hand in the late deſtruction of London *by Fire.*

REmarkable are thoſe expreſſions of *Job*, *cap. 6. ver. 2. & 3. O that my grief were thoroughly weighed! and my calamity laid in the Ballances together; for now it would be heavier than the ſand of the Sea: therefore my words are ſwallowed up*, and ver. 4. *For the Arrows of the Almighty are within me, and the poiſon thereof drinketh up my ſpirit: the Terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* How fitly may the people of *England*, but eſpecially the late Inhabitants of *London*, take up the ſame expreſſions? How juſtly may they wiſh that their Calamities were weighed by others, as well as felt by themſelves? But as it is is impoſſible to find Ballances able to contain the ſands of the Sea, ſo is it next to impoſſible to find any, in which the Calamity of *London* may be weighed, or any thing able to weigh againſt them (ſuch is the heavineſs thereof) beſides the ſands of the Sea: Yea, if *Jo's* particular grief and miſery were heavier than thoſe ſands, may not the like be ſaid of what hath now befallen thouſands, all whoſe loſſes and croſſes put together (though not any of them ſingly) are certainly heavier than his either was,

or could be. I think it is ſo far from being a ſin to put the judgements of God, as it were, into a ſcale, that we may learn how heavy they are (ſo far as we can attain) that I queſtion not but it is a duety, and am ſure it was the practice of that ſenſible Prophet holy *Jeremiah*, Lam. 4. 6. *The puniſhment of the Iniquity of the Daughter of my People, is greater than the puniſhment of the ſin of* Sodome, *&c.* There we ſee he layes the puniſhment of *Sodome* in one ſcale, and that of *Jeruſalem* in another, and weighing them againſt each other, concludes the latter to have been the heavier of the two: Yea, indeed the whole Book of *Lamentations* is, as it were, a pair of Ballances hung up, into which the Prophet is caſting in the ſeverall miſeries of *Ieruſalem* parcell by parcell (as he could take them up) till he had thrown in all; that he and others might underſtand to what weight the whole ſum did amount. Though there are ſome that are ready to faint under the chaſtiſements of the Lord, yet more are apt to deſpiſe them, eſpecially after ſome time, and when the ſurprize is over, and in caſe they themſelves are not ſo immediately, or ſo deeply concerned in them as others are. Then are they ready to ſay to others in reference to their loſſes, as the chief Prieſts and Elders did to *Iudas*, in reference to the trouble of his mind, *Mat.* 27. 4. *What is that to us? look thou to that*: Or to ſhew themſelves *Gallio* like of whom we read, that when the Greeks took *Soſthenes* the chief Ruler of the Synagogue and beat him before the Judgement-ſeat, *Gallio* cared for none of thoſe things. Though he ſaw a Perſon of Quality and of Integrity unjuſtly beaten in a publike way, he regarded it not. Let the

Gallio's

Gallio's of this Age read what I am now to write as touching the miſeries of poor *London*, and be perfectly unconcerned if they can, or exempt themſelves, if it be poſſible, from having any ſhare in that Calamity which they ſeem to ſlight, as if it were nothing to them, or as if the late fire had not ſo much as ſinged one hair of their heads, neither would, at the long run. I dare warrant them, that gray hairs of miſery are upon them alſo (and upon that account,) though they know it not.

When I enter upon the Meditation of *Londons* deſtruction, I had need to fortifie my ſelf with thoſe words of *Solomon*, viz. that *It is better to go to the Houſe of mourning, than to the Houſe of feaſting*, Eccleſ. 7. 2. For ſuch a diſcourſe can be no other, than as it were a Houſe of mourning, yea, *As the mourning of* Hadadrimmon *in the Valley of* Megiddon, Zach. 12. 11. And now methinks the Book of *Ieremy* called *Lamentations* doth ſo wonderfully ſuit the preſent caſe of *London*, as if it had been calculated for the Meridian of that City, rather than of *Ieruſalem*, or as if God had ſtretched out upon *London* the ſame line of confuſion, as he did upon *Ieruſalem*, or as if thoſe divine thunder bolts, which were ſhot againſt both thoſe famous Cities, had been made in one and the ſame mold, or as God ſpeaks, Amos 4. 11. *I have overthrown ſome of you, as God overthrew* Sodome *and* Gomorrah. So, as God overthrew *Ieruſalem* in like manner, and with many the ſame circumſtances hath he deſtroyed *London*. Our ſins were much what the ſame with theirs (as I have ſhewed, when I ennumerated the procuring cauſes of fire) and it is but juſt, that our plagues and puniſhments ſhould be the ſame likewiſe:

Now where ſhall I begin my diſcourſe of *Londons* calamity? Or how can I do it without premiſing thoſe words of the Prophet, Jerem. 9. 11. *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears*, &c. If my eyes be not a fountain my heart muſt needs be a Rock, and Lord ſmite thou that Rock, that waters may guſh out, whil'ſt I mention thoſe things that ſhould be bewailed, even with tears of blood.

That which firſt preſents its ſelf is the conſideration of what *London* was, nor can it be better expreſſed than in thoſe words, Lam. 1. 1 *The City that was Great amongſt the Nations, and Princeſſe amongſt the Provinces.* Sure I am *London* was the glory of *England*, yea the glory of *Great Britain*, yea the glory of theſe three Nations, if not in ſome ſenſe the glory of the whole World. But as the Prophet ſpeaks of *Ieruſalem*, ver. 9. *She came down wonderfully*, the ſame may be ſaid of *London*. But alas! What is *London* now, but another *Sodome* lying in aſhes? What is it but a heap of duſt and rubbiſh? The greateſt part of it ſeems to be conver ed into ſo many Church-yards, as conſiſting of nothing, but the Reliques of Churches, with waſte ground round about them, full of open Vaults or Cellers, like ſo many uncovered Graves, and fragments of houſes like ſo many dead mens bones ſcattered on every ſide of them: I had almoſt called it another *Smithfield* (alluding to the uſe that place was put to in the Marian dayes), for that every houſe was a kind of Martyr ſacrificed to the flames: and that (as is vehemently ſuſpected) by men of the ſame Religion, with thoſe that burnt the Martyrs in Queen *Maries* dayes: Witneſs that Frenchman that was convicted and executed upon his own acknowledgement of having

ving begun the Fire in *London*, whoſe confeſſion tels us that he was inſtigated by Papiſts (one or more) and the choice of his Confeſſor, that he was one himſelf. We can now no longer ſay of *London* Here it ſtands, but *Hic jacet* (as we ſay of one that is dead and buried) Here it lies; not that here it is, but that here it was.

May we not go on with thoſe words of *Ieremy* Lam. 1. 1. *How doth the City ſit ſolitary, that was full of people? How is ſhe become as a Widow?* Where are thoſe multitudes that inhabited *London* a few moneths ſince? How are they diſperſed and ſcattered into corners, ſome crowded into the Suburbs, others gone into the Country, diſabled in all likelyhood, from ever returning again, to ſettle as before; Who complains not that they ſcarce know where to find any body, even thoſe that they had wont to converſe and trade with, for that their former places know them no more, yea they hardly know the places again, where they dwelt formerly, or can find where thoſe houſes ſtood, which they inhabited many years together. To ſee a populous City ſo wofully depopulated in a few dayes time, and the late Inhabitants driven away as ſtubble before the wind; Whoſe heart would it not cauſe to bleed? How oft have I heard men ſay ſince the Fire we have occaſion to uſe ſuch and ſuch tradeſmen, that uſe to work to us but know not were to find them, we ſhould ſpeak with ſuch and ſuch Friends, but know not what is become of them, or whether they are gone. How many thouſand houſes (that were lately ſuch) do not now contain one Inhabitant, nor are fit to do it. This alſo ſhould be for a lamentation. Did the Egyptians mourn, when

but one was missing in every house, and shall not we when multitudes of whole houshold and houses are swept away all at once?

Why should I doubt to say, that a great part of the strength and defence of all *England*, yea, of all the three Kingdomes, is lost and taken away, in and by the destruction of *London*? Was not that great City able to have raised a mighty force in a short time, wherewith to have opposed an invading Forreigner? Was it not a Mine of Treasure, able to supply vast summes of monie for the use of King and Kingdome, at a short warning: and found as willing as able to do it? If a vast and stately Ship, as most that swim in the Ocean had been lost, how soon could, and did that famous City build such another? Surely, *London* was the sinews and the very right hand of all great and publick undertakings; and that they knew full well, that said in their hearts, Rase it, Rase it to the very ground. Are we not now like *Sampson* when his hair was cut, and should we go out to shake our selves as he did, *Judg.* 16. 20. should we not presently find it? Yea, are we not become like the men of *Sechem*, when they were sore, presently after their being circumcised, whom *Simeon* and *Levi* slew, *Gen.* 34. 25. Who can be a friend to *England*, or have any true English blood running in his veins, and not lament, to see so much of the strength of the Nation taken away at once? As *Jeremy*, speaking of what God had done to *Jerusalem*, (as in his own person) saith, *He hath made my strength to fall*, Lament. 1. 14. and then adds, *He hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up*: That is not our case as yet, but how soon may it be, our present weakness

neſſe and obnoxiouſneſs conſidered?

Is it not worth taking notice of, that the beauty and ſplendor of *England* is defaced and loſt by the deſtruction of *London*? How deformed is a body without a head? and was not *London* the head of *England*, in that ſence that *Damaſcus* is ſaid to have been the head of *Syria*, and the head of *Ephraim* to have been *Samaria*, *Iſa.* 7. 8. That is the head City, for we acknowledge a head Superiour to that, yea, Supreme under God, *viz.* our Sovereign, as it is, *ver.* 9. the head of *Ephraim* is *Remaliahs* Son. As the face is to the body, ſo was *London* to *England*, *viz.* the beautifulleſt part of it, and look how men reckon it a great prejudice to their bodies when their faces are marred by any great deformity, ſo is it to the whole Land (which is to be conſidered as one body, and all the parts of it as members of each other) when ſcarce any thing of that is left which was the very face of it. They that ſaw only the other parts of *England* ſaw (as I may allude with reverence) but it's back parts. Was not *London* as it were the Throne of the Kings of *England* ſucceſſively, and other places in compariſon of it, but as it were their Footſtool? (you know to what I allude.) Now *London* is gone may we not write *Icabod* upon the Nation, for that the honour of it is departed? Now who can be a true Engliſhman and unconcerned for the honour of his Nation, and not troubled to ſee it lie in the duſt? How is the honour of a Nation inſiſted on? How many wars are commenced and continued in the world to vindicate the honour of particular Nations? How hard is it for Nations to recede from the very punctillio's of their honour? Now if God hath diſgraced us and weakned our

reputation (as certainly he hath done) by taking away the great City, ſurely it ſhould be for a Lamentation? If our Father hath ſpit in our face, as *Moſes* ſaid to *Miriam*, *ought we not to be aſhamed ſeven dayes*, yea, ſeven years we had need for ſuch a ſpitting of fire in our face, as hath befallen us? *Jeremy* puts it amongſt his Lamentations, *Lam.* 1.6. *From the Daughter of* Zion *all her beauty is departed.* We proceed.

Whoſe heart would it not grieve, to think what precious fuel went to feed that pernicious fire? Goodly Houſes, noble Halls, belonging to ſeveral Companies, ancient and worthy Hoſpitals, affording relief to multitudes of poor and diſtreſſed people, magnificent Churches built (and ſome of them but lately repaired) at a very great charge, places of Judicature, and for the honourable reception of Magiſtrates, as *Guild-hall*, and others, Common places (as I may call them) of Trade and Tradeſmen, ſuch as *Blackwell-hall*, and the *Royal Exchange*, (the onely ſanctuary that I hear of, to it's own Founder,) uſeful and eminent Schools, as *Pauls*, and others, one famous receptacle of Divines, by the name of *Zion* Colledge, another for Civilians, one Cathedral, for largeneſs and ſtatelineſs of building, exceeding all that I have before mentioned. All theſe are well known to have been fuel to that fire; yea, all theſe were but a part of it's fuel. There were other things, which though they did not as to bulk equalize thoſe I have mentioned, yet in worth and value did far exceed them. In ſome places you might have ſeen rich wines, it may be Sack and Hippocras, burning for no bodies uſe, elſwhere coſtly Oils ſwimming about the ſtreets, and afterwards

wards converted into flames. Was not the fire fed in ſome places with rich houſhold-ſtuffe, and dear furniture, in others with ſhop-goods and wares of great value, as fine clothes, and ſuch like, which their owners wanted opportunity to ſend away? How many precious druggs, and odoriferous ſpices went up in thoſe flames, as ſo much incenſe? How many wholſome Medicines, and powerfull Antidotes, and great Cordials, ſuch as Mithridate, Treacle, Spirituous Liquors, Bezoardick Powders, Confection of Alchermies, Chymical Oils, and Spirits, were in great quantities conſumed by that fire, as if they had been good for nothing, or as if nothing had been too good for it. And above all other loſſes, What Scholler, (that is ſo indeed,) can with drie eyes mention the ineſtimable loſſe of books that was ſuſtained by that mercileſſe fire, to the undoing of many Bookſellers, in one ſence, and of many more Schollers in another. How many learned and uſefull Authors in ſeveral Languages, Arts, and Sciences, Divines, both Polemical, and Practical, Fathers, Schoolmen, Phyſicians, Phyloſophers, Lawyers, Hiſtorians, Antiquaries, Mathematicians, and others, beſides many precious manuſcripts (till then preſerved, like ſo many leaves of the Sybils) were then burnt to aſhes, as if our enemies the Papiſts, had been then diſarming us of ſome of our beſt weapons, wherewith we ſhould defend our ſelves againſt them? Yea, the very Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, the Bible it's ſelf, as to many hundred Copies of it, was then taken from us and burnt (as if it had been a piece of hereſie, or had fallen into Popiſh hands, who brook it not in our genuine tranſlations.) And this were more to be lamented

lamented than all the reſt, if that ſacred book, that book of books, might not more eaſily be reprinted, than many others that are of greater volume, and of which there are but few Copies extant. But as for our *Biblia Polyglotta*, midwived into the world at a vaſt charge, and by the unſpeakable induſtry of many learned and famous men, to the great renown of themſelves and of this Nation, how many of them were conſumed, as if they had been ſo much waſte paper, and who is able to repair the loſſe? Theſe things, as I ſaid before, were the fuel that fed the flames of *London*, *Quis talia fando Temperet a lachrymis?* Who can think of ſuch things as theſe, and not draw waters and poure out before the Lord, as the Iſraelites did at *Mizpah?* To have made, or fed as many bonefires, as are uſuall upon great ſolemnities, with meer Musk and Ambergreaſe, (if ſo much could have been had) had not been ſo great a charge and loſſe, as were all thoſe materials which went to foment the diſmall fire of *London*. Thoſe flames were higher fed (all things conſidered) than *Cleopatra* was, when, as it is ſtoried of her, ſhe drank diſſolved Pearls. How angry was the Almighty with us, when he would rather fling all this treaſure into the fire than ſuffer us to enjoy it? How unworthy did he proclaim us, when, in fact, he ſaid, better the fire ſhould have it than we?

But where did all this loſſe light? Was it upon *LONDON* only? Were few or none ſufferers but the Inhabitants of that City? Yea, doubtleſs, it was a terrible blow to the whole Nation

Nation or to the greateſt part of it. Who had any conſiderable intereſt in *England*, and none in *London* more or leſſe? As all Rivers run into the Sea, and all the lines of a Circumference meet in one Center, ſo did the intereſt of moſt conſiderable Engliſhmen, in *London*. Who had not ſome ſhare in that great ſhip, as I may call it, which is now blown up? They that had no immediate and perſonall intereſt in *London*, Had they not Relations Brothers or Siſters, yea it may be Sons or Daughters, or if not ſo, Kindred more remote, that were great ſufferers by this fire, and whoſe loſſes they ſhould lay to heart. *Nero* is ſaid to have wiſhed that *Rome* had had but one Neck, that he might cut it off at a blow. In reference to *England*, *London* was next to that one Neck, and hath not this fire cut it off at one blow? His Majeſty hath told us that his loſſe in the City was greater than any other mans, and what good Subject would not bewail that? But ſurely Reader it is thy loſſe, if thou art a Engliſh Proteſtant, as truely, though not as much as his. The loſſe was Catholick (that is univerſall) in the conſequences, as well as Roman Catholick in the Cauſes of it. But is this all that can be ſaid of the loſſe of *London*? Surely no, Read but the Book of *Lamentations* and you will find many more expreſſions applicable to the Caſe of *London*, beſides thoſe which I have taken notice of already, *Lam.* 1. 4. There ſaith the Prophet, *The wayes of Sion mourn, becauſe none come to the Solemn feaſts, her gates are deſolate.* All theſe their calamities are come upon us at once. Our Gates are laid waſte, our ſolemn Aſſemblies both Religious and Civil in moſt places of that which

which was called *London*, are unavoidably at an end, and if our wayes do not mourn, that is, if they have not a ſad and a ghaſtly appearance let all that paſſe by them Judge. Surely *London* is now the ſaddeſt ſpectacle that is this day in *England*.

Doth the circumſtance of time in which this fire befel us, add nothing to our affliction? Had we at the ſame time had many friends, and enemies but few or none, our miſery had been leſs: For then ſhould we have been much pitied, which had been ſome mitigation of our loſs: but did it not befal us at a time when we had few friends, but many forreign enemies round about us. This *Jeremy* lamented in reference to *Jeruſalem*, Lam. 1.2. *Amongſt all her lovers ſhe hath none to comfort her, all her friends have dealt treacherouſly with her, they are become her enemies.* Is it no aggravation of our miſery (ſurely it cannot be otherwiſe) to think how wretchedly our many enemies will triumph and inſult, becauſe of it, and cry, Ah,ah, ſo would they have it, *Lam.* 1.21. *All mine enemies have heard of my trouble, they are glad that thou haſt done it.* And *Lam.* 2. 25. *All that paſs by clap their hands, they hiſs, and wag their head, for the daughter of Jeruſalem, ſaying, Is this the City that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth,* verſ. 16. *All thine enemies ſay, This is the day that we looked for, we have found, we have ſeen it,* verſ. 17. *The Lord hath cauſed thine enemies to rejoyce over thee, he hath ſet up the horn of thine adverſaries.* Alſo in *Lam.* 3. 14, 45. You may ſee how much ſtreſs the prophet *Jeremy* did lay upon the inſultings of enemies, and how humbling a conſideration he took it for. When enemies congratulate our miſeries in

ſtead

ſtead of condoling them, it adds much. Surely *France*, but for ſhame, had rung bells, and made bonfires when the tidings of our fire did arrive there. God would that a people ſhould lay it to heart, when he expoſeth them to contempt. *Jeruſalem hath grievouſly ſinned, therefore ſhe is removed* (ſo is *London*) *all that honoured her, deſpiſe her, becauſe they have ſeen her nakedneſs.* He loves not his countrey that cares not how it is ſlighted, or who inſults over it.

What if it can be made out that there is no parallel at this day for *London*'s calamity, ſhould not that be for a lamentation, that God ſhould ſo puniſh us, as if he would make us an example to all the world, or as if we had been the worſt people in the world? *Ieremy* took that circumſtance to heart in *Ieruſalem*'s caſe, *Lam.* 2. 13. *What thing ſhall I liken to thee Oh daughter of Ieruſalem? What ſhall I equal to thee that thou maiſt be comforted?* So *Daniel* 9. 12. *For under the whole heaven hath not been done ſo great evil, as hath been done upon Ieruſalem.* If the like may be ſaid of *London*, (and indeed I have heard no man pretend the contrary at this day) its miſery muſt needs be great. If it be an unparallel'd ſtroke it muſt needs carry a great face of Divine wrath and diſpleaſure with it, and that doth add much, *Lam.* 2. 1. *How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his Anger? and remembred not his footſtool in the day of his Anger.* Ver. 3. *He hath cut off in his fierce Anger all the horns of Iſrael.*

Many things in this judgement ſeemed to carry with them a great face of Divine Anger, as namely, for that the Lord ſeemed to deſtroy *London*, ſo far as he went without any pity. Such a thing as this is be-

bewailed, *Lam.* 2.2. *The Lord hath ſwallowed up all the habitations of Iacob and hath not pitied*, And verſe 17. *The Lord hath thrown down and hath not pitied.* If God had taken away the houſes of rich men that could have born their loſs, and mean time ſpared the houſes of ſuch as were poor, there had been pity in that, but he was pleaſed to take all before him, and with the ſame beſome of deſtruction to ſweep away the habitions of the pooreſt, as well as of the moſt rich. And did not God's turning a deaf ear to all the prayers and interceſsions that were made, as for the greateſt part of *London* whilſt the fire was, and going on to deſtroy notwithſtanding though they cried unto him day and night that he would ſtay his hand and ſpare the remainder, I ſay did not that ſpeak God exceeding angry. This was one of *Ieremies* complaints, *Lam.* 3. 8. Alſo when *I cry and ſhout he ſhutteth out my prayer*, and verſe 44. *Thou haſt covered thy ſelf with a cloud, that our prayers ſhould not paſs thorough.* God did in effect ſay that, *Though Noah, Daniel and Iob ſtood before him, yet would he not be intreated for the City.* When prayers can prevail no longer in ſuch a caſe as that was, it is a ſign God is exceeding angry. Moreover the fierceneſs of the judgement, and the mighty force it came with, and the quick diſpatch it made, intimates, as if God for that time had abandoned all pity towards *London*: For may not theſe words of *Ieremy* be applied to us, *Lam.* 3.10. *He was unto me as a Bear or as a Lion he hath pulled me in pieces, he hath made me deſolate.*

If any man that reads theſe things be yet inſenſible of the heavineſs of Gods hand in this ſtroke let him beſides all that hath been ſaid, conſider how

how unexpected, and how Incredible a thing it was that *London* ſhould be almoſt totally conſumed by fire, ere this year were at an end? Now what, but the greatneſs of this judgement made it ſo incredible till it came? That ſome few houſes might have been fired in a ſhort time, we could eaſily have believed, but not that ſo many as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Lam.* 4. 12. *The kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the enemy ſhould have entred into the gates of Jeruſalem.* To think a judgement too great to be inflicted, and yet when it is inflicted to make light of it, are very inconſiſtant things, and mighty ſelf-contradictions. He that ſhould have come to a man worth eight or ten thouſand pound, a week before the fire, and told him that within ten days he ſhould not be worth ſo many hundreds, would he not have laugh'd at him, and ſaid in his heart, How can that be? Had all his eſtate been in houſes, ſome in one ſtreet, ſome in another, he would never have dream'd that they ſhould be all fired together, or within a few days of one another: And yet it is well known to have been the caſe of many to have been worth a good eſtate one day, and the next day, by the fire to have been reduced almoſt to nothing. How are the words of *Jeremy* upon this occaſion revived, *Lam.* 4, 5. *They that did feed delicately are deſolate in the ſtreets, they that were brought up in ſcarlet imbrace dunghils.* Great and ſudden downfalls cannot but move compaſsion in any man that hath bowels. As *Jeremy* ſpeaks of the *Nazarites*, Lam. 4. 6, 7. *That they who were purer then ſnow, whiter then milk, their viſage was become blacker then any coal*, ſo to think how they that lived in great port and faſhion, are many of them, as in the

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turning of a hand brought exceeding low, they and theirs, ſhould much affect us. The deſolation of ſo many houſes is a ſad ſight, but the ruine of ſo many families as this fire hath ruin'd, is yet a ſadder conſideration. Surely it hath fallen heavy, both upon rich and poor, rich men in the loſs of their eſtates, poor men in the loſs of their friends. The rich man hath loſt his talent, and the poor man hath loſt his ſteward that improved it for him in a way of relief and charity.

Is it not worth our adding, and throwing into the ballance, that this loſs by fire trod upon the heels of two other greater loſſes, *viz.* By war and peſtilence, the latter of which, not only diminiſhed our eſtates, but (which was worſe) deprived us of near and dear relations: yea, moreover that this judgement came before the other two were gone, or either of them, for is not the ſword yet drawn, and doth not the peſtilence ſtill devour? ſo that theſe three judgements have appeared together like three terrible Comets or Blazing-ſtars threatning utter deſtruction, and God hath come out againſt us riding as it were upon three ſeveral dreadful horſes, black, red and pale, to allude to what is ſpoken in the *Revelations*: And as for what concerns mens eſtates, it is well known that the ſword and peſtilence in ſeveral years hath not ſo much exhauſted them, as this fire did within a few days.

Meerly to avoid tediouſneſs I ſhall here add but two things touching *London's* loſs (though otherwiſe much more might be added) one is, that it is Invaluable, and the other that in the eye of reaſon it is Irreparable. It is in the firſt place Ineſtimable, namely, how great the loſs is for the preſent, but more

more eſpecially what ſad products & conſequences it may draw after it, for the future, whither the tayl of the Comet (as I may call it) may reach. It is a common, and I believe a true ſaying, amongſt the ſufferers by this fire, that they have loſt ſo much that they themſelves cannot tell what they have loſt. Only he that can tell the number of the Stars, and call them all by their names, doth know what the ſum total of this loſs is, and what are all the particulars of it, and what influence this Judgement may have upon the times to come; for certain it is the children which are yet unborn will in time fare the worſe for it. Who can eſtimate how great a dammage and confuſion will ariſe firſt and laſt from one branch of this loſſe *viz.* the burning of Bills, Bonds, Leaſes, Conveiances, Books of Debts, and Accompts, and other Writings of great conſequence, which was all that many men had to ſhew for the greateſt part of their Eſtates; what contention and confuſion this one loſs may produce no heart can conceive? who knows not that paper and parchment, ſuch as the contents thereof may be, may be of greater value than Pearls and Diamonds? How many had rather, yea had better have loſt thouſands of pounds, than ſome few ſheets of paper, that went to feed thoſe flames? O fire ineſtimably dear! O loſs unvaluable, Could this loſs be repaired the matter were not ſo great, but it either is or ſeems to be irrepairable at leaſtwiſe in the memory of any man now living. So that we may here take up the ſame complaint which the prophet did, Lam. 2. 13. *Thy breach is great like the Sea, Who can heal thee?* Or as he Jer. 30. 15. *Why crieſt thou for thine affliction, thy ſorrow is incurable?* I queſtion not the Omnipo-

tency of God, but, according to what is usual with God to do in the world, we can none of us expect to see that breach made up in many years, which was made upon *London* in a few dayes. Now put all these things together, and then tell me if his heart be not harder then the nether Milstone, that can see what *London* hath suffered, and not mourn with a very great mourning. If so a mazeing a Judgement will not awaken men, they are like to sleep in their security, till they come to wake in Hell, where none can sleep; for the smoke of their torment ascendeth continually, and they have no rest day nor night.

But are there any that call themselves Englishmen, that do not only not mourn over, but rejoyce and triumph in the destruction of *London*? Let them believe themselves to be legitimate if they can; at leastwise let them not think, that others will ever believe that there is one drop of true English Blood running in their veins: Or let the parents of their Bodies be who they will, I am sure that in another sense they are of their Father the Devil, and his works they do. If there could have bin mirth in Hell there would have been rejoycing there at the firing of *London*, as there is in heaven at the Conversion of a sinner. How worthy were they to have danced in those flames, who (if any such be) have sung and danced at the remembrance of them?

But what if some not only rejoyce in this being done, but had the heart to do it? How long was it ere I could believe there was any such Monster in the World? till I heard of one convicted for the same, and that by his own sensible and persevering Confession. Lord, What mischief

chief have they done? Is there any ſacrifice for their ſin? One would think, if there were no Hell, God would prepare one on purpoſe, for ſuch miſcreants, to burn them in, who have burn't up the Eſtates and Livelihoods of ſo many thouſands. But, Lord, thou knoweſt it is not my deſire they ſhould, nor is it my opinion, that the blood of Chriſt, laid hold on by faith, is not able to ſave their ſouls. And oh! Though their bodies ſhould be given as meat to the fowles of the air, or fewel to temporal flames, yet that their ſouls might be delivered from the wrath to come! Let them rely upon no pardon from that triple crowned blaſphemer of *Rome*, who cannot ſo much as pardon his own ſins, and it is well the (light of ſuch men conſidered, and how they hold the truth in unrighteouſneſſe) if they be not unpardonable. He that cheats men into ſin, let him not cheat them into Hell, by cauſing them to reſt upon his mock indulgences, who is eaſie enough to pardon ſuch peccadilloes in his account, as are the burning of Proteſtant Cities, yea, can be willing to enroll them amongſt his Saints. I confeſs a red letter would do well before their names, but onely in token of blood and cruelty. But, Lord, I deſire to look higher, than thoſe inſtruments of our late fire, even unto thee. Thou haſt ſet us on fire round about, and oh that we could lay it to heart as becometh us. We would hold our peace, becauſe thou, Lord, haſt done it. If thou hadſt ſo pleaſed *London* might have been like the Buſh, which did burn, but was not conſumed; but thou didſt give it up to the flames: Lord, at what a rate hath *London*, yea *England* ſinned that thou haſt thus puniſhed it? Thou doſt many

times puniſh men leſſe than their ſins deſerve, but never more. Which of us have not contributed by our iniquities, to this as well as to other judgements? Which of us have not cauſe to ſay, Lord forgive us, that by our ſins we have infected *London* and *England* with a devouring Plague, that we have helpt to embroil it in a conſuming War, yea, that we have had our hands as by way of demerit in kindling the late Fire, which burnt *London* to the ground.

MEDITATION II.

Upon ſight of the Weekly Bill for London *ſince the Fire.*

WIth how ſad a heart have I read that Bill, finding but ſixteen Pariſhes within the wals now pretended to, and conſidering with my ſelf by how great a Synecdoche ſome of thoſe Pariſhes do at this day go by their former names? It is that figure, which puts a part for the whole (yea a ſmall part too) the compounding Figure as I may call it, that takes as it were, five ſhillings or half a Crown for a pound) which alone warranteth us to call *London*, *London* ſtill, and ſeverall pariſhes (ſaid to be now ſtanding) by the names which they did bear formerly. The unjuſt Steward, *Luke* 16. 7. uſed ſubſtraction; onely where a hundred was owing he bid them ſet down fifty, but we (as if that were to be more juſt) proceed by way of multiplication ſetting down a a hundred for ten or twenty. We view our City as it were through a microſcope, which repreſents the leg of a Flea ſo big, as if it were the leg

leg of ſome creature far bigger than its whole Body. So might we call a ſometimes great and famous Inne, the Crown or Miter, as it was formerly called, though burnt down to the proportion of a Cottage, becauſe the ſign and ſign poſt are ſtill to be ſeen, and there is yet ſome ſmall part of the old Building. Is it not rather the Epitome of *London*, which we now have than *London* it ſelf, as if the abridgement of a Book in Folio (be it *Aquinas* his *Summes* or any other ſuch) ſhould go by the name of *Aquinas* his *Sums* (or what other name it bore in Folio) when contracted into a ſmal Manual or Pocket-Book. It is *London* in ſhort hand, ſuch as might contain the Decalogue within the compaſſe of a ſingle penny, rather than ſo at length if yet we may call it *London*.

Is it not rather *Londons* Remains and Ruins, its Urn and Aſhes than *London* it ſelf? So a Burgeſſe or two in Parliament ſtands for a whole Town, a Knight or two for a whole Shire, ſo Lords Spitual and Temporal write themſelves, *London*, *Yorke*, *Lincoln*, *Canterbury*, as if they were whole Cities or Towns, being indeed but ſingle and individual perſons. Methinks it is as if *Judah* and *Benjamin* were called *Iſrael*, being indeed but two Tribes of Twelve: Nor am I leſſe affected with that dolefull parentheſis in two ſhort words (*viz.* Now ſtanding). How am I puſht with the two horns of that parentheſis, putting me upon this dilemma, that I know not whether more to be thankfull, that all *London* is not fallen, or more to lament that ſo ſmall a part of it is yet ſtanding. The late Plague gave us to ſee and expect *London* without many Inhabitants (at leaſtwiſe for a

time, but to ſee *London* with but a few habitations was that we never lookt for. We have lately known a Plague, that laid thouſands of Citizens under ground, but who dreamt of a Fire that would lay the City it ſelf upon the ground? Hear O Heavens, and be aſtoniſhed O earth. I find as many ſorts of diſeaſes in the Bill now as ever. They find men out go whither they will they crowd into Families, that have ſcarce room enough to turn themſelves in. Death will not ſpare, (as if it pitied thoſe whom the fire hath not ſpared): Mens tabernacles muſt go to wrack as well as their houſes. But to confine my ſelf to the buſineſs of the fire.

Methinks *London* at this day is a lively Emblem of a Profeſſor fallen from his firſt Love, or rather a backſliding Profeſſor is juſt in ſuch a condition as *London* is at this day. He goes by the ſame name as formerly, but How far is he from being the ſame perſon he was? How like is he to thoſe Churches the outſides whereof are yet ſtanding; their walls and ſteeples make ſuch a fair ſhow, that they, who ſhould view them at a diſtance, would think, they were juſt as before; but alas! Their inſides are gone, they are fit for no uſe, yea their very out-ſides are ſo frail and brittle, that in a windy day men are loth to paſs by them for fear of being knockt on the head. What havock hath ſin made in all the faculties of ſuch men (which, if the Soul may be compared to a City, may be called the ſeveral ſtreets of that City) How hath error deſtroyed their underſtandings, ill habits their wills and inclinations to good, the World conſumed their ſpiritual affections, all theſe things conſpired to deſolate and lay

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waſte their Conſciences; and now thoſe men though called Chriſtians ſtill (and glorying in that name) lie juſt like *London* in duſt, and rubbiſh, and aſhes. O Lord, Give *England* to meet thee in the way of thy judgements, by a timely repentance, yea give theſe three Kingdomes ſo to do, leſt it come to paſs that hereafter *England* ſhould be called *England*; and Great *Britain*, Great *Britain*, and the three Kingdomes ſo; by as great a Synecdoche, as the poor Remains of *London* are now called *London*, and the Reliques of ſome ſtreets (ſaid to be now ſtanding) by the name thoſe ſtreets had, when in their beauty and glory.

MEDITATION III.

Upon the Diſcourſes occaſioned by the late Fire, both then and ſince.

SOme came to *London* in the time of the Fire, having heard of it (but not ſeen it) and probably their firſt queſtion was, Is the Fire out? Alas! no, would they ſay that anſwered them, It is ſo far from being out, that it rageth more and more. They that heard it was not out would be asking how far it was gotten, whereabouts it was: Then would men begin to reckon up the Streets and Churches that were burnt down already, *Thames* ſtreet is gone, and *Fiſh* ſtreet is gone, and *Gracious* Street is down, and now it is at ſuch a place, and ſuch a place, and ſo they would proceed. Is the Fire abated would others ſay? Is there any hope of extinguiſhing it? We ſee little ſign of it would ſome reply, It is feared it will conſume the whole City and Suburbs too. Why do

they not play their Engines would ſome cry? Alas they are broken and out of Kelter, we little expecting ſuch a ſad time as this. Some it may be would ſay, Why do ſo many people ſtand gazing on, and not run to help? The Fire hath now got ſuch head and is ſo fierce would they ſay that there is no coming near it: But why do they not pull down houſes at a diſtance? that is long work would ſome reply, and ſeeing they cannot carry away the timber, when they have done, it will do but little good. Do not the Magiſtrates, would ſome ſay, beſtir themſelves to put a ſtop to it? It is like they do what they can, but they are even at their wits ends, or like men aſtoniſhed. They that ſtood and look't on would cry out, See how it burns *Eaſt* and *Weſt* at the ſame time, not onely with the wind, but againſt it. Hear how it crackles like a Fire in thorns: Hear what a rattling noiſe there is with the crackling and falling of timber. Look you there ſaith another juſt now the Fire hath taken this or that Church, which alas is full of goods, now it is juſt come to the Royall Exchange; by and by would they ſay, See how preſently ſuch a ſtately houſe was gone, it was but even now, that it began to fire, and it is conſumed already: Oh what a wind is here, See how it is as bellows to the Fire, or as the breath of the Almighty blowing it up. You would wonder to ſee how far the ſparks and coles doe fly. It is ſtrange they do not fire all the houſes on the other ſide of the water, where abundance of them do ſight. I can think of nothing, ſaith one, but of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, when I ſee this ſight. Alas, Alas! cries one, now do I ſee ſuch a good friends houſe to take

take fire, and, by and by, now do I ſee the houſe of another good friend of mine on fire; in that houſe, that you ſee now burning dwelt a Brother or Siſter of mine, or ſome other near Relation. Others would come dropping in and ſay, They had ſtaid ſo long as to ſee their own houſes on fire and then they came away and left them, Such as dwell near to *London* and to the Road would cry as they lay in their beds, we hear the Carts rumbling and poſting by continually. Thoſe that were within the City, at that time, would ever and anon ſay to one another, Did you hear that noiſe. There was a houſe blown up, and by and by there was another houſe blown up. Others would cry, The fire is now come near the Tower, and if the powder be not removed, God knowes, what miſchief will be done with that. One while the people would take an Alarm of Treachery, and cry out that the French were coming to cut their throats.

Such whoſe houſes the Fire had not yet ſeized, but was haſtning towards them, you muſt ſuppoſe to have made this their diſcourſe, What ſhall we do for Carts to carry away our goods, we have offered three, four pounds a load for Carts to carry them but two or three miles off, and cannot have them. One while they cry there is an order to prevent the coming in of more Carts, it being thought that whilſt we mind the ſaving of our goods, we neglect the putting out the fire, and now will our houſes and goods burn together, and ſo we ſhall looſe all. Such as had the opportunity to convey their goods, as far as the fields and no farther. How did they diſcourſe of the hardſhip they muſt under-

dergoe, if they ſhould leave their goods, they would be ſtollen, if they ſhould look to them themſelves (as many had no body elſe to do it for them) they muſt have but little ſleep, and a cold open lodging, and what if it ſhould rain? And ſome we may imagine were diſcourſing, what they and theirs ſhould do, their houſes and goods being burnt, where they ſhould put their heads as having neither money nor friends, at leaſtwiſe ſo near that they knew how to get to them. Theſe were but ſome of thoſe dreadfull ſtories that men and women talkt of: I could tell you how women with child would ſay, They had but a month or a week to reckon, and this had frighted them almoſt out of their wits, ſo that they found it would go very hard with them. Others again would ſay, They were but ſo many weekes gone, but were ſo diſturbed, that they did never look to go out their full time: Others, it is like, would ſay, They were ſo ill with the fright they had taken, that they thought verily it would kill them, or that they ſhould never come to themſelves whilſt they lived. Would not others again report of ſome here and there, who by venturing too much in the Fire, or ſtaying too long to bring away their goods, had loſt their lives and periſhed in the flames?

Neither were all ſad diſcourſes exſtinguiſhed with the fire: For ſince that time it hath been the manner of Friends, as they met to ask ſome accompt of the loſſes each of other. Pray what loſt you, ſaith one, by the Fire? I loſt the houſe I lived in, ſaith one, which was my own, or as good as my own by virtue of a long Leaſe and a great Fine. I loſt my houſes and goods, ſaith another.

I loſt to the value of two thouſand pounds, ſaith one, I four: I, ſix, ſaith another. I have loſt the one half of what I had ſaith one: I have loſt all ſaith another, I am burnt to my very ſhirt. I have loſt more than all, ſaith a third, for I by this meanes am left in a great deal of debt, that I ſhall never be able to pay, I had many things belonging to other men committed to me, which are ſwept away. Saith another I am not only undone my ſelf, but ſo many of my Children and near Relations, it may be all of them are undone by this Fire, as well as my ſelf. But I need to ſay the leſs of this, becauſe every dayes converſe will or may tell us, what men talk ſince the diſmall Fire of and concerning it. O Lord, I ſee thou who canſt put a Song of deliverance into our mouths when thou pleaſeſt, canſt alſo fill us with complaints and lamentations when thou wilt, and make our own tongues, as it were to fall upon us, how thou canſt make us out of the abundance of our hearts, to ſpeak ſuch things as will terrifie both ourſelves and others, and cauſe both our own ears and theirs to tingle, how eaſily thou canſt find us other diſcourſe than to ask and tell what newes is ſtirring (for who regarded news whilſt theſe things were in agitation) who ſeemed to mind what became of affairs either by Sea or Land? I ſee how eaſily thou canſt imbitter our Converſe one with another, and make us ſpeak ſo as to break each others hearts, that uſe to delight and refreſh each other by their pleaſing conferences and communications, ſo that ſolitude may become leſſe afflictive, than that good company, which was wont to be very acceptable. Would not our tongues riſe up in judge-

judgement againſt us, if we ſhould ever forget the ſad ſtories we have told of thy moſt heavy hand upon us? Seeing thou haſt thus ſeaſoned our communication, as it were with ſalt, and ſalted it, as it were with fire, ſhall that which is rotten and unſavoury proceed out of our mouths from henceforth? Let us remember, what we ſaid to others, and what others ſaid to us, that we may never be unmindfull of what thou haſt done both to us and them, we have ſpoken with ſad countenances and with aking hearts. Oh that by the ſadneſſe of our countenances our hearts might be made better.

MEDITATION IV.

Upon the diſhoneſt Carters, who exacted exceſſive Rates.

IS there a Conſcience in men, or is there none? Or is there ſome ſuch thing in Pagans and Infidels, but no ſuch thing in Chriſtians? or is there a Conſcience in the Chriſtians of other parts, but none in Engliſhmen? Or is there ſome in other Engliſhmen, but none in plow-men, and Carters, at leaſtwiſe in the moſt of them, who came to help the Londoners away with their goods in the time of the Fire? Whatſoever there be in other men, there ſeems to have been no ſuch thing in them; witneſs their plowing, as they did, upon the backs of poor Citizens, and making long furrowes in the time of their utmoſt Calamity. Londoners have been glad ſometimes, if they could get but one in ten of their broken Chapmen, but you, when you ſaw a fire that was like

like to break hundreds of Citizens, would have ten for one; five pound for ſo little work, as ten ſhillings, if not five, would have been taken for at another time. *Let it not be known in Gath*: never let Papiſt, or Turk, or Jew, read this paper, whereby to know, what you have done: They would think it were never poſſible, to go to heaven in your Religion. Who can believe you to be ſo much, or ſo good as meer men? For can there be a man without humanity? The Apoſtle ſaith, *He is not a Jew that is a Jew outwardly*, and may I not ſay, He is not a Man that is a Man outwardly, but he that hath the tender heart and bowels of a man. As there are, *Wolves in Sheeps cloathing*, (as our Saviour ſpeaks) ſo, Are there not evil Angels appearing in the ſhape of Men? Did you do as you would be done by (which is the Rule of Juſtice) when you ſeemed to vie with the fire it's ſelf, which ſhould be moſt cruel, you or it? It gave moſt men ſpace to carry away their goods, you might have given them opportunity to have done it, and would not, but upon moſt unreaſonable tearms, ſuch as many were not able to come up to. Should Landlords, knowing you cannot live without ground to work upon, make you pay ten times ſo much Rent as it is worth, How would you curſe them, and be ready to call them Baptized Jews, Uncircumciſed Turks, or other names, as bad as thoſe; and ſuch as I dare not call you, (whatſoever you deſerve) as remembring, how the *Arch-angel durſt not bring a railing accuſation againſt the Devil himſelf, but only ſaid, The Lord rebuke thee*, Jude the 9th. Were any of you dangerouſly ſick, and in great extremity, and being ſo, ſhould ſend for the only Phyſician near at hand, and he

ſhould

ſhould refuſe to come, though it were to ſave your life, unleſs you would give him ten Fees for one; would you not go nigh to uſe that rude Proverb, concerning him, *viz.* That he would get the Devil and all? and would you not think, that one good angel might be better to him, than ten evil ones (and ſuch are all that are ill gotten)? Were your Wives in ſore Travail, and but one Midwife to be had, that were able to deliver them; and ſhe, knowing their neceſſity to make uſe of her, ſhould ſo far work upon it, as to capitulate for as many pounds as ſhe uſed to have ſhillings, or elſe, give out, that, for her, mother and child ſhould both periſh together: How would you make the Countrey ring of the ſavage cruelty of ſo extorting a Midwife? If you had urgent occaſion for money, and ſome biting Uſurer, knowing of it, ſhould make you, directly or indirectly, to pay twenty or thirty pound *per Cent.* how would you take on at him, and clamour upon him? Such was your dealing with poor Londoners in the day of their diſtreſs.

As the raging Sea, when men are in danger of being caſt away, will have a great part of their lading caſt into her lap, or not ſuffer them to ride ſafe; or as Thieves, do make men buy their lives at a great rate, which they ought nevertheleſſe to ſave, and ſuffer them to enjoy free-coſt; or, as the Devil himſelf, when he offers his aſſiſtance to men in their great ſtraights, exacts that of them for his pains, which is more worth than the whole world, *viz.* Their Souls; requiring to be paid manifold more than his work comes to: Such was the equity you uſed towards diſtreſſed Citizens in the time of the fire, (as if you had been

Jews

Jews and they Samaritans.) There was a Samaritan himſelf, who when he ſaw a ſtranger that had been robb'd, and wounded, and half-dead, had compaſſion on him, bound up his wounds, paid for his lodging, took care of him, *Luke* 10 33. Surely you are no akin to that good Samaritan; you took from them whom the fire had robbed before; you made their wounds bleed afreſh with your unkindneſs; you even killed thoſe outright with your cruelty, whom fire, and grief, and fear had made half dead before.

Did you ever read that Text *Acts* 28. 2. where *Paul* ſaith, *The barbarous people ſhewed us no little kindneſſe, for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, becauſe of the preſent rain, and becauſe of the cold.* This did Barbarians to ſtrangers, when expoſed but to rain and cold, which is nothing like ſo dangerous as fire: but what you Carters, called Chriſtians, did to men of your own Nation, and of your own Religion, the world knows too well; as if you, indeed, had been the Barbarians; and they that *Paul* ſpeaks of had been Chriſtians. Will not the Chriſtian-like carriage of thoſe Barbarians judge the barbarous carriage of you Chriſtians (if I may ſo call you)? Have you never read thoſe words, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10. *Extortioners ſhall not inherit the Kingdome of God?* nor thoſe in 1 *Theſ.* 4. 6. *Let no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, becauſe the Lord is the avenger of all ſuch.* Quit your ſelves, if you can, from having been Extortioners, and ſuch as have defrauded and gone beyond others. I doubt not in the leaſt, but this was a real theft in the ſight of God: You think it was not, becauſe they conſented and contracted to give you ſo much: But

ſo

ſo may a man conſent to deliver his purſe to a high-way man, that threatneth, if he do not ſo, he will have his life: Doth that make it no theft on his part that takes it? A man may conſent to that which is a real injury to himſelf, to avoid a greater than that; all that can be ſaid, is, No man can be forced, if he conſent. *Volenti non fit violentia*, is true, but not *Volenti non fit injuria*. If you have not wronged the poor Citizens, whether with or againſt their conſents (as it was partly both) never were men wronged. How many, think you, did loſe all, or the moſt of their goods, becauſe they had not wherewithall to give thoſe unreaſonable rates which you demanded, who yet could and would have honeſtly paid you as much as you in reaſon and conſcience could have demanded for the removal of their goods. Will not the great God, think you, place the loſs of thoſe goods, and the undoing of thoſe poor families to your accompt? Therefore, O Countrey men (honeſt Countreymen I muſt not call you till you better deſerve it) let my advice be acceptable to you: Bluſh for what you have done, repent, reſtore, make ſatisfaction to the full. What you have gotten in that way (unleſſe it be ſuch of you as ventured your own lives, or the lives of your beaſts, by going near the fire) will never thrive with you, yea, may prove a moth and canker to all you have beſides. Who were the large contributers to all Briefs, when your Towns and Houſes were at any time burnt, but theſe very Citizens, whom you have uſed thus unkindly? If fire ſhould happen in your thatch, which may eaſily be, (and which you have provoked God to ſend) how dearly would you miſs that City which you have

have ſo inhumanely oppreſſed? You that have not pitied Londoners, pity your own ſouls; and remember that true ſaying, Unjuſt gain is not remitted, (that is, forgiven) unleſſe, intentionally by thoſe that cannot, and actually by thoſe that can, reſtitution be made.

MEDITATION V.

Upon thoſe that ſtole what they could in the time of the Fire.

IT ſhould ſeem it was not enough for Londoners to have their houſes conſumed by fire, and their faces grownd by unconſcionable Carters, demanding half as much for carrying away their goods, as ſome of them were worth; (yea, ten times ſo much as was their due) but, as a further aggravation of their miſery, God was pleaſed to give *London*, as he gave *Jacob*, to the ſpoil, and as he gave *Iſrael* to the robbers. How many, under pretence of reſcuing their neighbours goods out of the fire, carried them away for altogether, (as if all things now had been common, becauſe the fire had broken down mens incloſures): Was this your kindneſſe to your friends? Was this the pity that ſhould be ſhewed to them that are in miſery? I have heard indeed of *Janizaries*, (that is, Turkiſh Souldiers), that when fires have been in *Conſtantinople*, would fall to plundering; but, are you Turks? Some living upon the Sea-coaſt, may, perchance, gain now and then by racks, bringing rich goods to their hands; but then, it is preſumed, the owners are caſt away, or cannot be known. They ſay, ſome Nurſes, that uſe to attend on ſuch as

have the plague, are wont to make away all they can lay their hands on: but then they ſtay, till the people whoſe goods they take, be dead, and have no further need of them. But you, barbarous wretches, ſtript the poor Citizens, being yet alive, and likely to live, and to need all they had, and more: Do you think much, to be chid for what you have done? Alas, yours is a great crime, It is *an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges*, yet, I had rather you would judge your ſelves for it, ſatisfie for the wrong you have done, and ſo avoid the puniſhment both of God and Men. You make me think of the Eagle, that ſtole away a coal from the Altar, and fired his own neſt with it. Were they not fire-brands ſnatcht out of the fire that you ſtolè away? If you continue to keep them in your Neſts, ſure enough they will ſet them on fire; I mean, they will bring a curſe upon all the reſt of your ſubſtance. You have done that, which one would have thought, no mans heart could ſerve him to have done. If other Thieves deſerve hanging, you are worthy of a Gallows as high as *Haman's*; for, the circumſtance of time makes your ſin out of meaſure ſinful. Would you offer to be ſtealing when God was burning? Would you take from thoſe, to whom you had more need to have given? Now you are told of your fault, be not worſe than *Iudas* himſelf, who, when admoniſhed but by his own conſcience, came and brought back that wages of unrighteouſneſs, which he had received, *viz. The thirty pieces of Silver*. I do not adviſe you, by any unneceſſary confeſſion, to bring your ſelves into danger; ſo you do every man right, what matter is it, whether they know who it was that wronged them?

them? If ever God pardon you, ſee one Condition that muſt be performed by you, *Ezek.* 33. 15. *If the wicked reſtore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed; he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not dye.*

MEDITATION VI.

Upon unconſcionable Landlords, demanding exceſſive Fines and Rents, ſince the Fire.

IS it a good Rule, that men may take as much as ever they can get, for ſuch things as men cannot live without? Surely, that is the Rule you go by, in asking and taking ſuch vaſt Fines and Rents for the houſes you lett. By that Rule, if ſome few men could be ſuppoſed to have all the Corn in *England* in their hands, they might ſell it for five pounds a buſhel: for men would give it, if they had wherewithall, rather than be without bread, which is the ſtaffe of life: But how would you curſe them that ſhould ſerve you ſo? You ſeem to have made a Covenant with fire, (as ſome are ſaid to have done with death, *Iſa.* 26. 15.) and with flames (as others with hell) to be at an agreement, that if an overflowing ſcourge ſhould paſſe thorough, it might not hurt you, as who ſhould ſay, If your houſes be burnt hereafter, yet they are paid for; ſuch Fines may be ſufficient to build them again: Methinks, I hear the great God ſaying, *Your Covenant ſhall be diſannulled, and your Agreement ſhall not ſtand; when the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſſe thorough, you ſhall be trodden down by it*, as it is, *verſe* 18. Like the builders of *Babel*, you ſeem to have been raiſing a Tower, to fortifie

your ſelves againſt heaven, but God will confound your Languages. Would you anticipate the rebuilding of the City, by obliging men alwayes to remain in the Suburbs? I wiſh, it may not be ſaid of you in a bad ſenſe (what the Pſalmiſt ſayes of others in a good) that *You take pleaſure in the ſtones of* London (*as they of* Zion) *and favour the duſt thereof*, Pſalm 102. 14. becauſe its ruine hath been your riſe. I doubt not, but the Fines you have taken, and the Rents you have agreed for, will be the undoing of many a poor Family, that, but for thoſe exactions, might have made a ſhift to live. Poſſibly, all the gains of your Tenants, (trading being ſo dead as it is, and is like to be) will ſcarce pay for the houſes they live in; and if ſo, wherewithall ſhall they and theirs ſubſiſt? Men muſt have meat to eat, and clothes to wear, as well houſes to dwell in; but your rack-Rents, and more than rack Fines, do eat the very bread out of their mouthes. When I think of the Fire, the Carters, the Pilferers, and you extorting Landlords, I cannot but recount, what is ſaid, *Ioel* 1. 4. *That which the palmer-worm hath left, hath the locuſt eaten; and that which the locuſt hath left, hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left, hath the caterpiller eaten.* How contrary have you been to Jeſus Chriſt, *who impoveriſhed himſelf to make others rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. whereas you have inricht your ſelves by making others poor. You have handled the poor City, as the *Sybils* are ſaid to have done their Prophecies, when they had burnt the greateſt part of them, asking as great a price for the Remains, as they did at firſt for the whole Book: what ever reaſon they had for that, I am ſure you have none for this.

Ruminate

Ruminate, I beſeech you, upon one Text I ſhall name to you, (with others of like nature) and then if you think fit to keep all the Fines you have taken, and to take all the Rent you have contracted for, give me leave to think, that your hearts do ſtand in no awe of Gods Word: The place I mean, is, *Zach.* 2. 9, 10, 11. *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil. Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy ſelf, thou haſt ſinned againſt thy ſoul; For the ſtone ſhall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhall anſwer it.* If you will not believe, try at your peril, if that ſaying of Chriſt be not true, *viz.* that *It will profit a man nothing to gain the world and loſe his own ſoul.*

MEDITATION VII.

Upon the burning down of many Churches.

WHen men are better informed, and leſſe under the power of prejudice, they will not be offended, at calling thoſe places by the name of Churches, where people meet together for the publick worſhip and ſervice of God, though the living Temples of God, (or, the faithful meeting together for ſuch ends and purpoſes) are in greateſt ſtrictneſſe and propriety of ſpeech called, the Church, or ſome part of the Church of Chriſt, which is his Body, each Believer a member of it, and himſelf the Head. There is a Figure in Rhetorick (and ſuch as we can hardly ſpeak without) which puts things containing, for the things contained; and if the Holy Ghoſt himſelf do uſe that

Figure, I am ſure we ought not to quarrel with it. I know not who can aſſure us, that the Scripture doth not ſpeak by that Figure, when it ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. *Have ye not Houſes to eat and drink in, or deſpiſe ye the Church of God?* But not to contend about words, I look upon it as a great miſery, that the places called by that name, are ſo generally demoliſhed. He that ſhall look upon them, but as great ornaments to the places where they ſtood; or, as ſtrong and ſtately buildings, that might have been employed to many good uſes; or at moſt, but as places, where firſt and laſt, many fervent prayers have been offered to God, many religious aſſemblies have met together, many excellent and converting Sermons have been preached, if he be conſiſtent with himſelf, cannot but bewail, that they are now made a ruinous heap. Moſt ſober men do think, there were ſome good and uſeful lights, ſhining to the very laſt, in thoſe Candleſticks; and for their ſakes, I wiſh, (if the will of God had been ſo) that thoſe Candleſticks might yet have ſtood; as alſo for the hope I had, that God in his good time, might have thruſt forth many more faithful labourers into thoſe Vineyards (if I may ſo call them.) Where now within the walls of that, ſometimes famous City, can hundreds and thouſands meet together, to reap the benefit of one and the ſame Sermon? I ſay, in how few places can it now be done (as formerly) with convenience and ſafety? We read of three thouſand ſouls added to the Church, by one of *Peters* Sermons, *Acts* 2. 14. But, where now could a fifth part of that number with freedome and allowance converſe together in order to ſuch a purpoſe? How many idle perſons are there like

to

to be in fields and alehouſes on the Lords day, under pretence they have no Churches to go to? What a vaſt charge and trouble will it be, to rebuild thoſe Churches, or many of them, which, if ever *London* come to be it's ſelf again, and Religion in any requeſt (as God forbid it ſhould be otherwiſe) muſt, and will be done. How forlorn would *London* have lookt, if all its Churches had been burnt, though all private houſes had been yet ſtanding? I dare not give thoſe reaſons, that ſome would do, why thoſe Churches were burnt; I dare not ſay, we may do as well without them as with them. What reformed Church is there in the whole world, that hath not ſuch places as thoſe for publick worſhip, and that is not careful to maintain and uphold them? I wiſh every private houſe were a Church, (as *Paul Salutes the Church that was in their houſe, viz.* in the houſe of *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*, Rom. 16. 5.) and yet I wiſh there were Churches every where beſides thoſe in private houſes. What if the blind zeal of Papiſts did build many of thoſe Churches, were they not converted to a better uſe? I think they could no more infuſe evil into thoſe places, than others can real and intrinſical holineſs. The Cenſers of *Korah* and *Dathan* (howſoever they abuſed them) were not caſt out of the Sanctuary, but made into *broad plates, as a covering for the Altar*, Numb. 16. 38. The deſtruction of Churches is pleaſing to few men, but thoſe who have outrun the ſobriety of Religion, and, who have made ſuch haſte out of *Babylon*, that, (as one ſaith) they are run beyond *Jeruſalem*. If ſome Miniſters, by the fire of their paſſion, or other provoking ſins, have helpt to burn the Churches, they did, or ſhould

have preacht in over their heads; and if ſome, that were, or ſhould have been hearers, have done the like, the Lord forgive them, they know not what they have done. But may I, or mine (if God ſo pleaſe) live to ſee *London* rebuilt, Churches re-edified, by the zeal and piety of Proteſtants, every Congregation furniſhed with a faithful Paſtor, every Candleſtick filled with a burning and ſhining light, all divine Ordinances purely adminiſtred, all places for publick worſhip greatly and cheerfully frequented, all good Chriſtians united in the ſervice of God; then, though our new ſtructures ſhould never be ſo great and magnificent, as our old ones were, we ſhall eaſily acknowledge, that the glory of our ſecond Temples, is far greater than was that of our firſt.

MEDITATION VIII.

Upon the burning multitudes of Books of all ſorts.

WHat the Prophet ſpeaks in another caſe, *Habbak.* 3. 8. *Was the Lord diſpleaſed againſt the Rivers? Was thine anger againſt the Rivers? Was thy wrath againſt the Sea?* I may here allude to, and ſay, Was the Lord diſpleaſed againſt the Books? Was his anger againſt the famous Libraries that were burnt? I doubt not, but there were many Books amongſt them, fit for nothing but the fire, *viz.* wanton Poems, idle Romances, prophane Comedies, lying Legends, heretical Treatiſes, ſcandalous and pernicious Pamphlets, but were they all ſuch? It had then been a good riddance, and this fire had proved the

the beſt *Index Expurgatorius*, that ever was. But alas! Who knows not, that better Books were not extant in the whole World than were thouſands of thoſe, which this Fire conſumed, and amongſt the reſt an innumerable company of Bibles, the beſt of Books. I can hardly forbear expoſtulating as *Abraham* did, *Gen.* 18. 3. Lord, *Wilt thou deſtroy the Righteous with the Wicked?* Thou didſt do ſo in this caſe, and yet wert certainly righteous in what thou didſt. Good Books are made for us, and for our ſakes too, they were deſtroyed; they had not offended, but we: We by our ſins, *make the whole Creation groan, and ſubject it to vanity.*

Who can ſufficiently lament the poor Bookſellers more generally undone, by this Fire, than any one ſort of men? But Why? No man can tell, there being amongſt them many honeſt and induſtrious men. But, O Lord, thy Judgements are unſearchable, and thy wayes paſt finding out: The greateſt viſible crime, wherewith I can charge them (and but ſome of them neither) was their printing, and ſelling ſome Books not fit to ſee the light: One *Jonas* diſquieted and indangered all that were in the ſame ſhip, and one *Achan* trouble all *Iſrael*, and one *Leviathan* might miſchief an Ocean of Books, as we read of the Creature ſo called, *Job.* 41. 31. *That he maketh the Sea to boil like a pot, he maketh the deep to boil like a pot of ointment.* Why did you ſet up *Dagon* by the Ark? Scripture and Anti-ſcripturiſme did do ill together in one and the ſame Shop: Bibles at one end, and Atheiſticall books at another: Books of Divinity in one corner of your Shops, and Books of Obſcenity in another: What was this, but from the ſame

Foun-

Fountain to ſend forth bitter and ſweet? This was like gun-powder put amongſt other commodities, which hazards the blowing up of all the reſt. This might be the great provocation on your part, but, I doubt not, but the loſſe came as much for their ſakes, that were Buyers, as for yours that were Sellers of Books: for the ſakes of your Cuſtomers, (that either were, or ſhould have been) as much as for your own. Some wanted a heart to buy Books, though they could and ſhould have done it: others bought books enough, but wanted induſtry to peruſe them (and ſo anticipated others that would have read thoſe Books, if they had had them, or could have gotten them) Others both bought Books and read them, but did not too many do it, onely for oſtentation ſake, or out of curioſity (as deſirous to taſte the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge both of good and evill) with deſign meerly to inform, not to reform and amend themſelves thereby, or for other ſuch low, and ſiniſter ends? In all this we played the Wantons with our books, and Was it not juſt with God to take them from us, as Parents uſe to take the meat from off their Childrens trenchers, when they ſee, they eat out of meer wantonneſſe? Put to no better uſes, they would but have riſen up againſt us in the day, when the *Books mentioned*, Revelat. 20. 12. *Shall be opened, and the dead judged out of the things therein contained.*

But, whatſoever the particular cauſes of this Judgement were, ſure I am, the loſſe of ſo many excellent books, was a great blow, both to Religion and Learning. We loſt a far greater treaſure in their worth, than in their price, though that alſo amounted to a very great ſum, far ſurpaſſing

paſſing the price of thoſe *Books of curious Arts*, ſpoken of, *Act.* 19. 19. *Which thoſe that believed are ſaid to have burnt, though they reckoned them worth fifty thouſand pieces of ſilver.* Alas! What was that to four times fifty thouſand pieces of Gold, which ſome have judged this loſſe to amount unto? Who ſeeth not, by this inſtance, that Books are of a periſhing nature, as well as other things; he, that, by means thereof, would raiſe to himſelf a laſting monument, may fail of his end. He ſpake like a vapouring Poet, that ſaid, *Famque opus exegi quod non Jovis ira, nec ignes, nec poterunt flammæ nec edax abolere vetuſtas.* I doubt not but many of thoſe Poems of his were at this time metamorphoſed into flames; and, by the ſame reaſon, all may be one time or other. Books worth a thouſand of that ſuffered in the ſame flames, and yet, I think, their ſufferings not to have been the ſame; as is uſually ſaid, *Cum duo faciunt idem, non eſt idem*; ſo, *Cum duo patiuntur idem, non eſt idem*, is as true. Good books burnt like Martyrs, Bad ones like Malefactours: the former aſcended up to Heaven, like ſweet Incenſe: the latter like the ſmoke of the Bottomleſs pit. As ſome waters run by each other, and yet mix not, ſo in a morall ſenſe may we judge of theſe flames, which conſumed the good Books, and the bad ones.

Were it not in vain to wiſh for a reſurrection of Books, How ſhould I long to ſee it? Oh! that at leaſt our forty thouſand Bibles might be recovered again, though all the other books were irrecoverably loſt; the next Age may be for books, though this be all for News. But ſince, *à privatione ad habitum non datur regreſſus* (in this as in ſome other caſes) ſince we can never look for them

them again; let us remember the Italian proverb, which ſaith, *Deliver us from that man that reads but one book* (intimating, that he, that doth ſo, is like to be too hard for any man, in defending the principles of that one Author) and be thence encouraged to read thoſe few books that are left us over and over, ſo ſhall we find *dimidium plus toto* to be verified in this caſe, a part, ſo improved, will do us more good, than the whole had wont to do, as one diſh, well fed upon, refreſheth us more than twenty, that do but glut us with the ſight and ſent of them. Let us take occaſion from this, to acquaint our ſelves more then ever, with thoſe four Books, which are of more conſequence than all the reſt, *viz.* The Book of Creation, Providence, Scripture, and that of our own Hearts and Conſciences. The multitude of our other Books may have impeded us from looking, ſo much as we ought, into theſe; and now they are diminiſhed, let us more then ever delight ourſelves in theſe, and meditate therein day and night. If thou didſt make an Idol of thy books (as ſome men did) and doſt now mourn, for the loſs of them, as *Micha* did for the taking away of his gods (*Judges* 18. 24.) Conſider, that the beſt of knowledge (and that the Scripture is ſufficient to inſtruct thee in) is that, Saint *John* ſpeaks of, *John* 17. 3. *This is Life eternal, that they might know thee, the onely true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.*

MED-

MEDITATION IX.

Upon the burning of the Royall Exchange.

IT is but a few moneths ago, that one, who had never ſeen the *Royall Exchange* before, would have beheld the glory of it with admiration; as one, or more of the Diſciples of Chriſt, did the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, *Matth.* 13. 1. ſaying, *See what manner of ſtones and what manner of buildings are here*: But, behold, that which Chriſt ſpake of the Temple, ſaying, *Seeſt thou theſe great buildings! There ſhall not be left one ſtone upon another, that ſhall not be thrown down*, is already almoſt fulfilled in, and upon that ſtately Pile, the deſtruction whereof, we little dream't to have been ſo near at hand. Some ſtones there are yet ſtanding one upon another, but ſo, as that they muſt be taken down, and had they fallen, without breaking themſelves, it had but ſaved a labour: What a princely foundation was that *Royal Exchange*? and of how great uſe? Was not that the Center in which thoſe lines met, that were drawn from all parts of *Europe*? rich Merchants, I mean, and other eminent Tradeſ-men and great Dealers, not onely Engliſh, but Spaniſh, French, Dutch, Portugueze, Danes, Swedes. Was not the place a little Epitomie, or rather Repreſentative of all *Europe* (if not of the greateſt part of the trading World) renewed every day at ſuch a time, and for ſo many hours? As *London* was the glory of *England*, ſo was that *Royal Exchange* one of the greateſt Glories and Ornaments of *London*. There were the Statues of the Kings and Queens of

of *England* ſet up, as in the moſt conſpicuous and honourable place (as well receiving luſtre from the place where they ſtood, as giving luſtre to it.)

How full of Riches was that *Royall Exchange*? Rich men in the midſt of it, rich goods both above and beneath. There men walk't upon the top of a Wealthy Mine; conſidering, what Eaſtern Treaſures, coſtly ſpices, and ſuch like things were laid up in the bowels (I mean the Cellars) of that Place. As for the upper part of it, Was it not the great Storehouſe, whence the Nobility and Gentry of *England* were furniſhed with moſt of thoſe coſtly things, wherewith they did adorn either their Cloſets or themſelves? Here, if any where, might a man have ſeen the glory of the world in a moment, as the Devil ſhewed it to Chriſt from a high mountain; What artificiall thing could entertain the ſenſes and fantaſies of men, that was not there to be had? Such was the delight that many Gallants took in that Magazine of all curious varieties, that they could almoſt have dwelt there (going from Shop to Shop, like Bees from flower to flower) If they had but had a Fountain of Money that could not have been drawn dry. I doubt not but a Mahometan (who never expects other than ſenſible delights) would gladly have accepted of that place, and the treaſures of it for his heaven, and have thought there were none like it. About the ſpace of nineteen months was that *Royall Exchange* in building, *viz.* from *June* 7th. til *November* in the year following: So that the Sunne had finiſhed his annual courſe once, and almoſt a ſecond time, ere that work was finiſhed: but was it ſo many hours in burning,

ning, as it was months in building?

How obnoxious are all earthly things to deſtruction? How eaſily are the works of our hands brought to nought? How little a time will ſerve to ruine thoſe things, that did require a long time to raiſe them? I finde this noble Structure had ſtood about a hundred years before Deſtruction overtook it: for it is ſaid to have been erected in the year 1566, and the time of its conflagration, we know too well, to have been 1666. One ſixty ſix built it, another ſixty ſix burnt it; ſo one *Philip* founded the Macedonian Empire, another *Philip* ruined it; one *Conſtantine* built *Conſtantinople*, and another of that Name loſt it; an *Auguſtus* was the firſt eſtabliſhed Emperor of *Rome*, and another *Auguſtus* the laſt. So many times the World goes round like a Circle, where it begins, there it ends. Did that Structure come down in a day or leſſe, which had continued a hundred years, and might in all probability have laſted one Century more? I ſee then there may be more in the womb of one day or night, than was in the womb of a hundred years before, and the law of providence may, in a few hours over-rule the preſcription of a whole Age. Though the deſtruction of Places, and ſo of Perſons ſet out late, yet, when it once ſets out, it may ride poſt, and come, as upon the wings of the wind. *He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed*, *Prov.* 29. 1. The ſins of that place had deſerv'd this judgment ſooner: but he that bore with the old World, one hundred and twenty years, after warning given, bore with it towards an hundred, though the provocations thereof were great. As nature hath placed the weightieſt things below, and lighter things above them

them (as Air above Earth); ſo the more ſolid perſons and parlyes (as well as the more bulky Commodities) had wont to be in the lower Rooms of that Exchange, where Merchants met to diſcourſe their affairs. The ſins of that lower part, we may ſuſpect, to have been craft and covetouſneſſe, over-reaching and going beyond one another. Many did not ſo becauſe of the fear of the Lord; (as *Nehemiah* ſaid of himſelf, *Neh.* 9. 5. *So did not I, becauſe of the fear of God*) but others did. And were there not other kinds of ſin, which did abound in the upper Region of that Exchange, which, like ſo many Comets or blazing Stars, did portend or threaten the deſtruction of it. Oh the pride and prodigality that was there to be ſeen? How few could be charitable, that were ſo expenſive as many were in that place? And how much of that which was there expended, might well have been put to charitable uſes? How unlikely was it, that they ſhould be humble, who were ſo curious and phantaſtical, as the things that were there bought, ſhewed them to be? They that wrought to that place, had need of as good a phantaſie for Metamorphoſis in Habits, as *Ovid* had in other Things, that they might pleaſe cuſtomers ſo inſatiable after novelties.

So fell that noble ſtructure, undermined by craft and covetouſneſſe, and over-laden with pride and prodigality above, and great was the fall thereof. Though there was in that place an Inſſurance-Office, which undertook for thoſe Ships and Goods that were hazarded at Sea, either by boiſterous winds or dangerous enemies: yet could it not ſecure it ſelf, when ſin, like *Sampſon*, took hold of the pillars of it, and went about to pull it down.

What

What quick work can ſin and fire make? How did that ſtrong Building vaniſh of a ſudden, as if it had been but an Apparition? How quickly was it taken down, as if it had been but a ſleight Tent, the Cords whereof are preſently looſened, and the Stakes ſoon removed? Oh that ſome *Jonas* might have been ſent, to tell us, that within ſo many days that Exchange ſhould be burnt down, if we repented not. Oh that howſoever, a timely repentance might have prevented thoſe ruins; that we had commuted for our Exchange, by parting with our ſins. But ſince it lies in aſhes, and there is no prevention of it, oh that we may not ſo much lament the burning of our Exchange, as the ſins that burnt it. May the minds of men, by this ſad Providence, be diſpoſed to uſe another Exchange, for onely honeſt Merchandiſe; and the minds, both of men and women, to uſe the upper part of it no more as a Nurſery of pride, but, in order to putting them and theirs, into a decent equipage, befitting their reſpective qualities; and then may they live to ſee another Structure in the ſame place, not inferiour to the firſt, and that *Royal Burſe*, or *Purſe* (which is now a meer *Vacuum*) as well filled as ever it was before; and after that, if the Will of God be ſo, may it never periſh (at leaſt wiſe by fire) more, till the Conflagration of all things.

MEDITATION X.

Upon the burning of Hospitals, and Rents thereunto belonging.

RIghteous art thou O Lord, yet let me plead with thee concerning thy Judgments. Why had the fire a Commission to burn down Hospitals? Why didst thou dry up those pools of *Bethesdah*? Why didst thou wither the Goards of those poor *Jonas*'s, who had nothing else to defend them from the scorching of extream poverty? Was ever money given to better uses, or with a better intent, than what went to the maintaining those houses of Charity? Or was it ever intrusted in better and safer hands, than that which had so many persons of worth and integrity to take care of it, (and be, as it were, Overseers of, the poor)? Or what charity was ever disposed of more according to the will of the Doners, than that hath always been, which few or none would accept, but those that had need of it (and for them it was intended)? I should have thought, the Doors of those houses, above all others, would have been sprinkled, that the destroying Angel might have passed over them, and that Judgment should not have entered, where onely Mercy did seem to dwell. Did not Christ say, *The poor we have alwayes with us*, and shall we have no Receptacles for the poor? The poor increase daily, but the places of their relief are diminished; and where those places are yet standing, yet is not much of their Revenue impaired? Shall the Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Aire nests, but the poor not have where to lay their heads? Came this for their sakes, whose charity did

did maintain theſe places, or for thoſe that were maintained in them and by them, or for the ſake of others; or for all the three? Whileſt ſome contributed to thoſe places out of pure ends and principles, might not others do it out of ſuperſtition and conceipt of merit, others out of Oſtentation? (though we may not impute thoſe things to any in particular): And as for thoſe who were relieved in thoſe places, were there not ſins amongſt them alſo? Some, it may be, were not more poor than wicked; ſo, that though their poverty made them the Objects of Mercy from men, yet their wickedneſs expoſed them to the Juſtice of God.

Doubtleſs, men by ſin, may forfeit, not only their ſuperfluities and conveniencies, but alſo their very neceſſaries, or ſuch things as they cannot live without: and had not too many of theſe ſo done? Though ſome, whoſe miſeries have brought them to ſuch places, are affected with the hand of God, and fear to ſin whileſt his rod is upon them; yet, were there not others, who no whit appalled by all their ſufferings (were it the loſs of limbs or whatſoever elſe) would ſwear, and drink, and rant, at ſuch a rate, as if they had had all the world before them, or thought ſcorn, that as to theſe things, even the greateſt perſonages ſhould go beyond them. Had all been ſuch as ſome were, poſſibly the Great God had not forborn to ſet fire upon thoſe Houſes long ago. But in relation to others, might not this come, Firſt, to try their ſincerity, whether their hearts would ſerve them to give to good uſes, though by this it appears, they can have no aſſurance of raiſing any laſting monument to their names thereby. Or, Secondly, to try their Faith, whether they would caſt their bread, as upon the

water, ſo upon the fire, as it were, (or that which may eaſily be burnt) in hope to find it after many dayes. But the probableſt reaſon of all is, that it came to prove and exerciſe their Charity, and to call upon them (ſo many as are able) to *make to themſelves friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when they fail, they may be received into everlaſting habitations.* Why ſhould the poor be alwayes maintained by an old ſtock of Charity? Why ſhould not this Age be as charitable as former Ages were? Though many be poor at this time, yet all are not, yea, there are many rich, though not comparative to the number of ſuch as are poor, nor have rich men ever more to do, than when there are moſt poor. Poor men think it a bleſſed thing to receive; but Chriſt hath told them, It is yet a more bleſſed thing to give. The Italians when they begge, uſe to ſay to them of whom they begge, Pray be good to your ſelves.

As much as iniquity doth abound, I will not believe, unleſſe I ſee it, that Charity is grown ſo cold, that amongſt all the rich men that are in *England*, Nobles, Gentlemen, and others, there will not be found enough to repair that breach which the fire hath made upon the poor Hoſpitals, and the revenues, formerly belonging to them. You know, (or, if I thought you did not, I can tell you) where and whence you may defaulk enough to rear up thoſe Structures again as large and fair as before, (though one of them was ſometimes the Pallace of a Prince, even *Bridewell* it's ſelf) and to indow them as liberally as ever, and not to miſſe what you have parted with, when you have done. Think how much extraordinary it uſeth to coſt you every year upon your luſts, one or more.

One

One mans Drunkenneſſe coſts him an hundred pounds in a year extraordinary, another mans Uncleanneſſe twice ſo much, a third mans Gameing no leſſe, and ſo it is like to do from year to year: Yea poſſibly ſome men have ſpent, as much of their time upon one luſt, as would have built an Hoſpitall. Now as God ſaith, that he *would famiſh all the gods of the Heathen*; ſo do you famiſh thoſe luſts which you have idolized, cut off thoſe right hands, that they may graſp no more of your money, for time to come, and let the poor receive it in their ſtead. Is it not better lending to the Lord, than giving to the Devil? Why will you buy repentance ſo dear, when you might put your money to ſo much better uſe? Some that have fallen into very hainous ſins, have built Hoſpitals, for the relief of their own Conſciences.

God may pleaſe to leave you to the ſame ſins, and ſo extort that out of you, by the ſame means, if it will not come freely. Some, though free from notorious vices, yet do manifeſtly exceed in diet, and in apparel. What if you ſhould leſſen your Table by one or two diſhes every day? What if you ſhould ſpare ſomething of that ſuperfluous coſt, which you uſe to give yourſelves in every garment; and reſolving ſo to do, ſhould contribute all that, to the rebuilding and reindowing the conſumed Hoſpitals, which, you reckon, that good husbandry would ſave you every year: What if Gentlemen ſhould keep fewer hounds and hawks, or none at all, in order to ſo good a work? Yea, What if you ſhould put two horſes leſſe into your Coaches, which had wont to be drawn with four or ſix? You may think yourſelves at liberty in

this caſe, but pardon me, if I think you are bound. It is not matter of choice, but duty, to miniſter to the neceſſities of others, out of our ſuperfluities, and to their extremities, out of our very conveniences. He, that is unmercifull or uncharitable, is alſo unjuſt, becauſe he doth not uſe the talent, wherewith his Lord hath intruſted him, for thoſe ends for which it was put into his hands: He doth not fulfill the juſt will of the Donor: Let it never be ſaid, that God gave you Eſtates to do good with, but you ſpent them upon your luſts, that you can find ſo many pounds, or hundreds of pounds, to conſume in Taverns and Tippling-houſes, ſo much treaſure wherewith to keep Miſtreſſes (otherwiſe called whores) ſo much gold and ſilver, wherewith *to treaſure up to yourſelves wrath againſt the day of wrath*, but nothing wherewithal to rebuild, or help forward the rebuilding of ruinated Hoſpitals.

Break off your ſins, by repentance, and your iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor, as *Daniel* ſaid to *Nebuchadnezzar*. All the good you do ſincerely will be your own another day: Therefore ſaid *Paul*, Phil. 4. 17. *I deſire fruit that may abound to your account*. The ſame Apoſtle, ſpeaking of the Churches of *Macedonia*, ſaith, *That their deep poverty had abounded to the riches of their liberality*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 2. and, Shall not your riches amount to as much as did their poverty? *Chriſt became poor to make us rich*: and, Shall we think much to be ſomewhat leſſe rich, that we may relieve thoſe that are extreamly poor? Look not to receive that joyfull Sentence from Chriſt, *Come ye bleſſed, &c.* unleſſe he may ſay of you, *For you ſaw me hungry and fed me; naked, and clothed me*, meaning his Members, which are himſelf, myſtically; (ſo the

the Church is called Chriſt.) Let not the aſhes of, ſometimes greatly uſefull, Hoſpitals cry to Heaven, againſt your want of bowels, *He that hath this worlds goods, and ſhutteth up his bowels againſt thoſe that are in want, How dwelleth the love of God in him?* The worſe uſes, that any have formerly put their money to, the greater obligation lies upon them to put it to good uſes (as they are called) for time to come. Not onely the ill getting of money calls for extraordinary charity (which made *Zaccheus* ſay, *The one half of my Eſtate I give to the poor*) but alſo, our having ill ſpent it, in times paſt; for it is with money as with time, by how much the worſe we ſpent it formerly, by ſo much the better, we ſhould ſpend it for the future. Princes have laid theſe foundations, and will it not be an honour, for Subjects to build upon them? your work may poſſibly ſtand hundreds of years (as ſome of thoſe houſes, yet in being, have done) whereas theirs is fallen to the ground. In a word, next unto the honor of building a Temple for Gods houſe (as *Solomon* did, and *David* was ambitious to have done) is that of building a houſe for Gods Temples, and ſuch are all true believers, how poor and mean ſoever.

MEDITATION XI.

Upon the Burning of Publick Halls.

If any think thoſe Halls were built meerly for feaſting and entertainment (or at the moſt but for pompe) they are much deceived. Certainly, they were both intended and improved to higher

and better uſes. All great Bodies and Societies of men muſt needs, for order ſake, be divided and ſubdivided. So Armies are divided into ſeveral Regiments; Regiments, into ſeveral Troopes or Companies: ſo Navies divide themſelves into ſeveral Squadrons. Upon the ſame accompt, the Citizens of *London*, being a great Body of Traders, and thoſe of ſeverall Profeſſions; it was but neceſſary, they ſhould be parcelled into ſeveral Companies, having each of them their peculiar Officers, which made them as it were an entire body by themſelves, fitted with head and members of all ſorts, the reſpective Maſters being, as it were, the head, the ſubordinate Officers, the Eſſential parts, and the ordinary members the integral. Both decency and conveniency required, there ſhould be a handſome place, for each of thoſe Societies to meet in; which was, as it were, a little Parliament Houſe belonging to them, in which the Repreſentatives of each Company (I mean their Officers) did meet together to conſult and Parley, what might be for the good of the whole. Here the grievances of each Society (falling within their cognizance) where complained of and redreſſed. Here they adviſed and agreed together what to do, and what to petition their Superiors for, that might be for the benefit of their reſpective trades and Profeſſions, how they might prevent encroachments and abuſes, how they might maintain their priviledges, how they might take all advantages, for the beſt improvement of their reſpective Trades. In all of theſe a common ſtock was kept on foot, and carefully lookt after, for divers needful purpoſes; as namely, for the relief of ſuch of their own Society, as

ſhould

ſhould fall to decay, for helping young beginners, who had little to ſet up with, and might there borrow upon good ſecurity, for improving the Eſtates of Widowes (as in the Book-ſellers Company) and for many other good purpoſes; one of which, Schollars ought never to forget, and that is for encouraging young Students, by liberall exhibitions wherewith to increaſe their maintainance at the Univerſity. There were in ſeverall Halls, though not in each of them, Stocks going for all theſe purpoſes (and it is like for many more, which may ſufficiently evidence, that they were places of great uſe; which, I mention to ſhew, what cauſe we have to bewail the loſſe of them. To ſay, they were moſt of them noble Structures, even thoſe that did belong to the meaner Trades (as, who ſhould ſay, they aſſumed ſome grandeur to themſelves, as they were a Society, whatſoever their condition might be ſingly and apart) Or, to ſay, that the meeting together, of the members of thoſe Companies, in their ſeverall Halls, upon many great ſolemnities, was a probable means to increaſe love and friendſhip amongſt them, were to deſcend to lower conſiderations about them, then I have yet taken notice of (and yet thoſe things are not altogether contemptible) and therefore I ſcarce care to mention them. But put all I have ſaid, together (though poſſibly I know not half the uſes they were put to) it will appear a doleful thing, that they were burnt, and that, in their deſtruction, we loſt, not onely great Splendor, but great conveniences, helps, and advantages, and that in ſeveral kinds. If men did there decree righteous things amongſt themſelves (as I hope they did)

I know no Crime thoſe places were chargeable with, unleſs it were too much Feaſting: which, the ſadneſs of Times, for many years paſt, might put an aggravation upon: And, if that were all their Crime, I ſee, how neceſſary it is, to ſhun, not only greater, but alſo leſſer ſins, which may expoſe Places; and, if Places, Why not Perſons alſo to ruin and deſtruction.

One Hall there was of ſomething a different uſe from the reſt, and of greater ſpendor, *Guild-Hall* I mean; in which, one *Author* tells me, no leſs than nine ſeveral Courts had wont to be kept; whereof, one was called, *The Court of Conſcience*: If any of the reſt did not deſerve the ſame name, (which I cannot charge:) thoſe, or that which did not, ſhould be lookt upon as the *Acan's*, which troubled that place, and brought a curſe upon it, *One ſinner deſtroyeth much good*, ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 9.18. What then may not an unrighteous Court do, which conſiſts of many ſinners? When I conſider the Largeneſs, the Strength, and yet the Antiquity, the Majeſty, and the daily-Uſefulneſs of that ſame *Guild-Hall*, methinks it is not enough to weep over the Ruines of it: As firm as it ſtood, it was founded no leſs than upward of 360 years agoe; and, to ſee it confounded, (as I may call it) in one day, Whoſe heart would it not cauſe to bleed? Other Halls were like Parliament-Houſes, to particular Companies; but this, to the whole City: where the Aſſembling together of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common-Councill, had ſome reſemblance of a King, Lords, and Commons. There ſeemed to be an awfulneſs in the very place; methinks it had a Majeſtick look with it; and ſuch, as made the Magiſtrates there convened (though very

ry venerable in themſelves) yet ſomething more conſiderable than they would have appeared elſewhere. It was ſurely that place, which did more contribute to make *London* look like it ſelf (that is, like the Head-City of theſe three Kingdomes) than any one Structure thereunto belonging. *London* had not been its ſelf, if it had loſt nothing but that one Hall: I wonder, That all the Wiſe Heads, that were concerned in it, could not ſave that ſtately Hall, (our *Engliſh*-Capitol, as I may call it) from burning: Methinks it ſpeaks our Provocations-high, that we have ſinned away ſo great an Ornament, ſo vaſt an Accommodation as that Hall was; and, to think, that almoſt all the reſt are gone with it, might make our *joynts tremble*, and our *knees ſmite together*, as *Belſhazzar*'s did, when he ſaw the *hand-writing upon the wall*. I ſee there is no building certainly durable, but that, which *Paul* ſpeaks of, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. and, Lord, let that be mine (as well as his,) *That building of God, that houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

MEDITATION XII.

Of the Burning of Publick Schools, as Pauls *School, and others.*

IS Learning taking it's leave of *England?* Is that Sun about to ſet in our Horizon? that Schollars have received two ſuch terrible blows? Young ones have loſt their Schools; and, both young and old have loſt their Books: Nevertheleſs, for ever Renowned be Reverend Doctor *Colet*, and the reſt of the Founders and Benefactors of all thoſe noble Free-Schools that now lie in the duſt: I ſay, Let their

their Memory be ever precious, though their Gift hath not continued ſo long, as they and we did hope it might. Yet, the youngeſt of the three Publick Schools, that are now demoliſhed (*viz.* that which was founded by the *Merchant-Taylors*) had laſted above a hundred years; and the eldeſt of the three. (*viz. Paul's*) half as long again, and many Centuries more they might have ſtood, had not this fire brought them to an untimely end. I cannot but muſe to what a plunge Parents are now put, to get good Schools for their Children, (eſpecially thoſe, who cannot endure their Children ſhould live at a diſtance from them) conſidering, that honeſt and able School-maſters are but here and there to be found. A good School-maſter muſt, in the firſt place, be a good man: It is to a wonder what notice Children will take of their Maſter's Religion, and what a laſting impreſſion that will make upon them; and how apt they are to take after them, becauſe of the veneration they have for them. If their Maſters be profane, they think they have leave to be ſo, and ſhould not take upon them to be more religious than they. A Maſter muſt conſider, that his Scholars have ſouls to ſave, as well as minds to inform, and he is not to be truſted with Youth that will not conſider it. Nextly, A good Maſter muſt be a good Scholar, (at leaſt wiſe for ſome kind of Learning) a good Grammarian, a good Linguiſt; and one, that is not only ſo himſelf, but alſo able to make others ſuch, that is, one that knows how, in an eaſie and familiar way, to communicate Knowledge to Children, to make hard things plain, &c. He muſt be διδακτικὸς (as the Apoſtle ſaith, a Miniſter ſhould be) that is, *Apt to teach.*

Again,

Again, A good Maſter muſt be a wiſe man, no antick, no mimmick (as too many are, which hath made the word *Pedant* and *Pedantical* to ſound very ridiculouſly, though the work of a good School-maſter be very honourable). Wiſe he ought to be, that he may ſet his Scholars the Example of a wiſe behavior, and teach Children to carry themſelves like Men; whereas, ſome ſeem to learn of their Scholars to carry themſelves like Children, that is, Conceiptedly, Humorſomely, Phantaſtically. It requires no ſmall Wiſedom, to judge of the different parts and tempers of Children, where their excellency lies, whether in Memory, or Invention, or otherwiſe, that they may put them upon thoſe pieces of Learning, in which they are like moſt of all to excell: and whileſt they find them to have an excellency in one kind, work upon that, and bear with their defects in another kind. He may have a great Memory, that hath but mean Fancy; he may be long in retaining, who is ſlow in getting things into his memory; one can make his exerciſe of a ſudden, as well as if he had more time; another can do nothing of a ſudden, but, give him time enough, and he will perform it excellently, and better than he that was quick at it.

How many Maſters commit great errors, for want of being able to judge of theſe things, like unskilful Riders, that either think a horſe good for nothing becauſe he cannot amble well, though he have an excellent and an eaſie trot; or keep him wholly to his pace, though he do but ſhuffle at it, and can never be made to do otherwiſe: whereas he would trot as faſt as could be deſired, and as well as any horſe can do, if they would but give him

him leave. The Scholar's Scholar-craft, (as I may call it) in humoring his humorſome Maſter: the Parent's great bounty to the Maſter, and his great affection to ſuch his Scholars, upon thoſe two accounts, makes too many partial and injudicious Maſters, Cry up the pregnancy of thoſe Scholars that little deſerve it, and ſo *vice verſâ*. And ought not Maſters to be wiſe therefore alſo, that they may be able to judge of the diſpoſition of their Scholars, whether fair means or fowl is like to do moſt good upon them, whether fear or ſhame will moſt prevail with them, whether emulation or correction will moſt ſpur them on. A word or two will do more with ſome Children, than many blows with others; where Balſomes will ſerve the turn, it is folly to apply Cauſticks and Corroſives, which, it is to be feared, ſome Maſters do for want of judgment. Moreover, wiſe and ſage Admonitions are of great uſe to Children; and therefore, it is needful, their Maſter ſhould be a wiſe man, that he may be able to diſpenſe them Let me add, A Maſter had need be furniſhed with Wiſedom, to govern and conceal his own weak humors and paſſions (as there are many that abound with ſuch) for that the diſcovery thereof, is like *Noah*'s uncovering his nakedneſs, in the ſight of his Children, which expoſed him to their contempt, and made ſome of them to ſin: And Maſters that give way to ſuch humors, are like unſound Nurſes that give ſuck, who make the Children that draw their Breaſts as unwholſome as themſelves; and fill them, as they ſay, with evil humours. I might add, That a Maſter ſhould be no conceited man, not one that thinks himſelf a good Philoſopher, becauſe he is a good Philologer; or the

the wiſeſt man in the Nation, becauſe he is the wiſeſt perſon in the School : He that is a Man amongſt Children, may be but a Child amongſt Men. I had not mentioned this, but that I have obſerved ſome School-maſters, to have brought an ill report, both upon themſelves and their Profeſſion, by ſeeming as wiſe in their own eyes, as they could be in the eyes of their boyes, who oftimes think, that no man knows ſo much as doth their Maſter, as if they were proud of that high opinion, which their Scholars have of them, and did reſt in the judgment of Children (who ſcarce know the right hand from the left,) as if it were infallible.

Laſtly, To ſay nothing of that diligence and laborioufneſs that ought to be in School-maſters, I ſhall only add, that they ought not to be either too milde or ſevere, neither like that Beam, which *Jupiter* (as it is in the Fable) gave to the Frogs for their King : Which alwayes lying ſtill, when they were uſed to it a while, they leapt and plaid upon it : Nor yet like that Stork, which was afterwards ſent amongſt them, when they deſired a more active Prince, whoſe cruelty made them wiſh for their Beam again. He, that is over-mild, is like to do little good upon ſome children ; but, he that is over-harſh, may do a great deal of hurt. I read, *Acts* 19. 9. of the *School of one Tyrannus* : I wiſh there were no more Schools that did deſerve the ſame name. We hear but of one Tyrannical Emperor that became a School-maſter before he died ; but, Are there not many School-maſters that domineer, and exerciſe ſeverity like Tyrannical Emperors, or Imperial Tyrants? Now, if the character I have given of a good School-maſter be a Digreſsion; yet, it may prove a uſeful one, if

Parents

Parents will thereby be directed in the choice of Maſters for their Children, or Maſters that are guilty of any of the forementioned faults, would thereby be prevailed with to amend.

But poſſibly, what I have ſaid about School-maſters, is no Digreſſion, conſidering, that if thoſe Maſters that were fired out of *London*, were men of ſuch a good Character, as I have given of a good School-maſter, it informeth us what cauſe we have to bewail the loſſe of them, and of thoſe Schools which might have invited and incouraged a ſucceſſion of ſuch worthy Maſters as themſelves. This poor Lads little lay to heart (as being ignorant of what is for their good); yea poſſibly, what through dread of their Maſters, diſaffection to their Books, and love of their Play, they are even glad their Schools are burnt; ſo incident it is to humane nature, to rejoyce in any little good to it's ſelf: yea, to wiſh for it, though it be brought to paſſe by unſpeakably more hurt and prejudice to others; being glad, when their own eggs are roaſted, though it be by that fire, that conſumes the houſes of other men. Yet I wonder not, at the evil that proceeds from degenerate men, much leſſe from Children: but, O Lord, I rather wonder at Thy ſelf, Why thou didſt ſuffer the Foxes to ſpoil thoſe Vines (the Fire, I mean, which came like *Sampſon*'s Foxes, with fire-brands in their Tails, conſuming thoſe Noble Schools, as they did the *Philiſtim*'s Corn,) conſidering, that *thoſe Vines had tender Grapes*, Cant. 2. 15. But I would anſwer my ſelf with this: Schools had their ſins as well as other places, which were more and greater than a Maſter's rod could puniſh. Yea, Maſters themſelves had deſerved Correction, and who but Thy

ſelf

ſelf ſhould give it them? But oh that theſe uſeful Structures might not alwayes lie in the duſt, but that Piety and Charity might rebuild what Sin hath pull'd down. Doubtleſſe, this Age hath many men in it, as able to build Free-Schools, as Reverend *Colet*, and ſome other Founders were; and why ſhould they not be as willing. If Parents want good Schools for their Children, they will hardly come to any thing whilſt they live: (For, the errors of the firſt Concoction, as Phyſicians obſerve, cannot be corrected by the ſecond or third). Schools, like Stomachs, make the firſt Digeſtion, which if naught, will ſpoil all the reſt. Let me conjure men of Eſtates, eſpecially thoſe that have no Children, or if Children ſuch as are unworthy, I ſay, let me conjure you, by the regard you have to the honour of God, to the renown of the Engliſh Nation, to the increaſe of Knowledge, to the happineſſe of Church and State, (the chief Officers and Miniſters whereof, uſe to receive their firſt rudiments and ſeaſoning in publick Schools) liberally to contribute to the re-building of thoſe noble Schools, which the late fire hath deprived us of; yea, do it yourſelves, as ſome have done before you, if you have wherewithall: And when that is done, ſet up your Statues by thoſe of the ancient Founders, and appear together like *Caſtor* and *Pollux* at Sea, which is accounted an Omen of good. Take your choice of four ſorts of good works, which may beſt ſuit with your tempers. If you are ſevere *Cato*'s, help to re-build *Bridewell*, where naughty Perſons may receive Correction, and be made to work: If you are devoted to the Service of God, help to re-edifie Churches: If to works of Mercy, contribute towards the

raiſing up of demoliſhed Hoſpitals: But, if you are friends to Learning, and to all the other three, do what in you lieth, to reſtore Publick-ſchools to their former glory; in which, Vice may be corrected, Mercy ſhewed to poor mens Children, and Religion promoted, by preparing Youth, to be, in time, ſerviceable to the Church.

MEDITATION XIII.

Upon the Burning of Tombs, and Graves, and dead Bodies that were buried therein.

WHere is reſt to be had, either for the quick or dead, in this World? where may men be quiet and ſecure, if they cannot be ſo in their very Graves? One would have thought, nothing would have pluckt them from the horns of that Altar; But, the fire hath done it: That fire, which robb'd the Spittles, Hath it not alſo robb'd the Worms, and taken the meat out of their mouths? We expected, thoſe Bodies would have turned Worms-meat and duſt; but, inſtead thereof, they are burnt to aſhes. So *Job*, ſpeaking of the grave, *Job.*3.17. *There the weary are at reſt*: So they are in one ſenſe, but not alwayes ſo in another. The righteous mans grave is called his bed, *Iſa.*57.2. *They ſhall reſt in their beds.* How many dead bodies then were burnt in their beds? and, ſo might many living ones have been, if God had not been more merciful. Now, the fire hath turned many dead bodies to aſhes: could thoſe aſhes (as ſome others) be made into glaſſe, which, they ſay, is the laſt reſolution that bodies can undergo (*Vitrificatio eſt ultima reſolutio*;) yet would the Reſurrection find them

them out, and not loſe one grain belonging to them. We read, that *Abſalom* had reared up a Pillar, or ſtately Sepulchre for himſelf, to preſerve his name, becauſe he had no children; but, it went by the name of *Abſalom's* Place, or empty-Monument (Κενοτάφιον) as *Tremellius* renders it in the Margint; becauſe he never (for ought we read) came to lie in it, but *was buried in a pit in a wood, with a heap of ſtones caſt upon him*, 2 Sam. 18. 18. So, in that great City, there were many that had provided noble burying-places for themſelves, againſt the time they ſhould be gathered to their fathers; yea, and they were poſſeſſed of them, (which *Abſalom* never was of his:) but, How ſhort a time had ſome of their bodies lain in thoſe coſtly Sepulchres, before the fire came and turned them out of poſſeſsion; or rather deſtroyed both their Carcaſſes and their ſtately Monuments!

I ſee, how vain a thing it is, for men to have their Names, and Titles, and Encomiums, graven upon Marble-Stones in Golden Letters, and ſet up in Churches: How eaſily they may be deceived, that think, with *Abſalom*, out of thoſe ſtones, to raiſe up to themſelves (I cannot ſay children) but a Memorial in lieu of Children. Every body will not believe all the Epitaphs they find inſcribed upon thoſe Monuments-Stones can lie and not bluſh: But, beſides that, if men were prone to believe all they read upon Tombs and Monuments, How ſoon may thoſe Characters be ſo defaced and obliterated, as that they cannot be read? And, look how *Abſalom* was buried under a heap of ſtones, in ſtead of being laid in that ſtately Pillar, or Pyramid, which he had built for that purpoſe: So, are not many at this day covered, but as it were

with a heap of ſtones, who had provided themſelves of ſtately Sepulchres; thoſe Sepulchres of theirs being by the fire converted, but into a rude and formleſs heaps of ſtones: She erected a more durable Monument for her ſelf, who did but *pour out a box of precious vintment upon the head of Chriſt*, Matt. 26.17. for, Chriſt hath ſaid, *Whereſoever the Goſpel ſhall be preached in the whole world, there ſhall this be told for a memorial of her.* How little doth it ſignifie, that our Names be written upon the Earth, or upon any part of it? Is it not all in all, that our Names are written in the Book of Life? I ſee, there is no reckoning upon thoſe things which men leave behind them when they die; therefore hear, and receive it as a voice from heaven, that which the Spirit ſaith, *Rev.* 14.13. *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, and their works do follow them.*

MEDITATION XIV.

Upon the **Burning** *of Writings; as Bills, Bonds, Evidences,* &c.

HOw many had nothing to ſhow for all the Money they had lent out; for all the Debts that were owing them, upon any accompt: yea, for all their Intereſt in Lands and Houſes, to a great value; but only certain Papers, or Parchments, called Bonds, Shop-Books, Deeds, Conveiances, Leaſes, *&c.* Writings are the moſt compendious Treaſure in, and of the whole World: Of ſo many ſingle Sheets of Parchment, may it not be ſaid by ſome, This is my Money, (all I have in the World;) that is my Houſe; that is my Land; this is my

my Inheritance; that is my Jointer; this is my Patent for such an Office, or for such a Dignity; this is my Discharge, for so much Money that I have disbursed for such and such; this is my Account, for so many thousands that I have been intrusted with: Oh the vast concernment of such Papers and Parchments as these! What had not many rather have lost than these? How many were honest and just in all their Accompts, who now want an opportunity to make it appear they were so? (and, Doth not that wound them sorely?) How many dealt falsely and fraudulently in the trust that was committed to them, and that cannot be proved neither? Doleful fire! that hath made honest men mourn, and knaves rejoyce. With what cost and care were many of those Writings drawn up at first? How oft were the owners at Counsel about them? and, With how much circumspectness was every Clause put in? but, Did the fire make any more of them then if they had been so much waste paper? Deeds and Conveiances were no more to those flames than chips, and straw, and stubble: How slight is that Tenure, by which men do hold and enjoy all their Earthly Possessions? How soon may that, which should defend their title, be stoln, or burnt, or otherwise lost? and then, How liable are they to be claimed by those that have no right? Was there ever such a plucking up of Inclosures as this, whereby the Estates of many are, as it were, laid common, that is, obnoxious unto being invaded, and over-run by them that will.

It is well, a Christians evidences for heaven are not so uncertain: It is true, that coppy of them which is within his own breast, may be lost, or missing, at leastwise for a time; but then there is a counter-part

counter-part of them kept in heaven, which can never be loſt: for, *The foundation of God ſtands ſure, and he knoweth who are his.* It is happy for us that uncertain things are thoſe of leſs value; but, that thoſe things which are moſt valuable, (though indeed only they) may be aſcertained and inſured in heavenly things. Sad was the loſs of Writings, as they were Evidences of mens Eſtates; but, methinks more ſad, as they were the Vouchers of mens honeſty: or, if by this meanes, either honeſt men become ſuſpected, or, thoſe that have been otherwiſe cannot be detected and diſcovered: But, methinks, where alwayes heretofore found faithful, it is but equal to admit no jealouſie of them upon this occaſion. No doubt, but he, that was faithful till the fire, will be faithfull after it, and not be worſe for that Purgatory (if I may ſo call it.) O Lord, Art not thou he that didſt find out a way to acquit thoſe chaſt Women that were ſuſpected of Adultery, *Numb.* 5. 28? Art not thou he who didſt furniſh *Solomon* with wiſdom, to know which was the true Mother of the living child, to which two Women laid an equal claim, 1 *Kings* 3? Art not thou he that didſt direct Queen *Emma* and others to paſſe the hot plow-ſhares bare-foot and blind-fold, without hurting her ſelf; when, by that ardent fire, proof was to be made of her unſpotted chaſtity? Clear up, I beſeech thee, the integrity of thy innocent ſervants, whoſe Accompts and Acquittances this fire hath deſtroyed: but, as for others, ſearch out their wickedneſs till thou find none; or, as thou ſaidſt, thou wouldſt *ſearch Jeruſalem with candles*, Zeph. 1. 12. What work hath this burning of Writings made for greedy Lawyers? What a harveſt

veſt are they like to have by that means? One fire, I doubt, will beget another, *viz.* that of endleſs contention, and Law-ſuits: Now the fire hath gotten mens Vintage; I wiſh, unjuſt Claimers on one hand, and Lawyers on the other, do not ſweep away their Gleanings: They are newly leapt out of the fire, and, Muſt they preſently come into the frying-pan? Can the wiſdom of our Governors find out no way whereby to prevent vexatious Suits, that will otherwiſe ariſe upon this occaſion, to preſerve the rights of honeſt men, now their Writings are gone; and, to prevent the unjuſt claims of thoſe that are diſhoneſt? If ever Magiſtrates needed a Prieſt (one, or more) to ask Counſel for them, after the Judgment of *Urim*, before the Lord, *Numb.* 27.20. (as *Eleazar* did for *Joſhua*,) now is the time. Howſoever, thou, O Lord, who girdeſt up the wrath of men (or ſo much of it as will not turn to thy praiſe) vouchſafe to put ſuch a reſtraint upon the ſpirits of men, that thoſe, who were half-undone by the fire, may not be utterly ſo, either by mercileſs Lawyers, or by unrighteous Adverſaries, and unjuſt Claimers.

MEDITATION XV.

Upon the Burning of Saint Pauls *Church: the unconſumed Body of Biſhop* Brabrook.

HOw long was this goodly Cathedral in building? How leaſurely did it proceed? Inſomuch that it became a Proverb, when men did any thing ſlowly, That they made *Pauls*-work of it: But ſo did not the fire, when it came to deſtroy it, but

conſumed it preſently, as if it had been but *Jonas* his gourd, which ſprang up in a night. Dying Perſons are oft-times very reſtleſs, they ſhift from one ſide of their beds to the other, and talk much of removing to other places. So, have I obſerved, this noble Structure, not long before its fatal period, to have ſhifted often. Firſt it was a Church, then a Stable (as ſome were pleaſed to make it) within theſe few years (but the argument was far fetcht, if, they think, that becauſe Chriſt himſelf did ſometimes lie in a Stable and in a Manger, that therefore, one and the ſame place might well ſerve, both for brutiſh and for ſacred uſes) Otherwhile (if not at the very ſame time) it was made a Court of Guard (without any intention, as I believe, to make it an Emblem of the Church Militant, or to exhibit any other religious myſtery.) And then of late, it wheel'd about again to its Primitive uſe, to be a place appropriated to Divine Worſhip. Few expected it would continue long a Stable, or a Court of Guard (for great alienations, like ſtrong ſticks that are much bent, do quickly ſtart back again) but, when it became once more a Church, they that conſidered it had ſtood above five hundred years, from its firſt Erection (yea, and Conflagration, which latter was in 1087. after which it was ſoon built again, and did obſerve it to bear its years well, (as if it were at moſt but of a middle age) ſaw no cauſe to doubt, but it might laſt as much longer. But alas! How were they deceived? and How was its deſtruction at the very door! Surely Papiſts are deceived, in thinking Crucifixes to carry a ſafeguard and protection with them, conſidering, that this Cathedral was built in the figure

gure of a Cross, and yet, when Fire did approach, had no relief by it. It had been a comfortable sight, to have beheld the first erection of that stately Church, [considering the Scituation and Dedication of it, that whereas before, in the same place, stood a Temple Dedicated to *Diana* (and as is supposed, a Wood and Grove about it, devoted to her use) there was then another in the room of it; the name whereof might speak the place alienated from heathenism to Christianity, from the service of a false goddesse, to the service of the true God, and of his Son *Jesus Christ*. Twice hath that famous Structure been fired before (at leastwise part of it) both times by lightning, and thereunto exposed by the transcendent height of its Steeple. One of those times it burnt a great part of the City of *London* (if I mistake not;) and now, the City, by a kind of unintended retaliation hath helpt to burn it. Great pity it is to see so noble a building in the dust, and yet it is likely some will but little pity it, if not rejoyce in the ruins of it (especially its disaffected neighbours, whose houses that had wont to lean to the sides of it (like Vines climbing upon a wall) had at leastwise received sentence to be pulled down.) But should not men regard the honor of their Nation, whatsoever became of private interests?

One strange and remarkable passage that did relate to this Cathedral, I cannot but reflect upon, *viz.* The unheard of continuance of a certain dead Body, *viz.* the Body of one Dr. *Braylrock*, sometimes Bishop of *London*, and Lord Chancellor of *England*, which was there interred above two hundred years ago, and, as several that have seen it do inform,

inform, was taken up ſince this fire, and found to retain much of it's manly ſhape, and moſt of it's external parts, to the amazement of ſuch as beheld it, and did withall believe it to be indeed the Body of the ſaid Biſhop. I ſhall not diſpute, whether the dignity of his Perſon, as he was ſometimes a Biſhop, or as he was ſometimes Lord Chancellor, or as he was both at once, were that which did conſign over his Body to ſo long an incorruption, (as if Corruption and Worms had been afraid to claim kindred of him, as of others): but, I think, rather than either, that this came to paſſe to ſhew the power of God, as to preſerving Bodies from Corruption in the Grave, as well as thoſe of the three Children, from being conſumed in the fiery Furnace; and that of *Daniel*, from being devoured by the Lions, when he was in their Den.

But whilſt this paſſage miniſtreth great wonder to all that ſee and hear of it, What is himſelf the better for it? For, had his Body been eaten by Cannibals, thoſe Cannibals by Fiſhes, thoſe Fiſhes afterwards by Men, thoſe Men by Worms, yet, ſhould it have been brought forth as perfect, at the Reſurrection of the Dead, as now it is; yea, as it was then, when it was firſt committed to the Grave.

Now, as for re-building of that Cathedral, when I conſider, how many Sons that Mother hath had, who in all Ages have been as kind and bountiful to her, as could be deſired; I doubt not, but the ſame principles and affections which led them to it in her proſperity, will prevail with them to be the ſame, now ſhe lieth in the duſt; commiſeration towards her, and conſideration of the honour of *England*, ſtepping in as further incentives thereunto.

thereunto. May *England* (if the will of God be so) enjoy so much peace and plenty, and all the living Temples of God be so well provided for, that none may grudge that cost and charge, which is necessary to re-building Churches; not onely such, and so many, as may serve for indispensable use, but neither that also, which may rear up others, not only for use, but such as may be also, an outward honour and ornament both to the Church and Nation.

MEDITATION XVI.

Upon the Visiblenesse of Gods Hand in the Destruction of London.

IT is a great dispute, amongst many people, whether men (one or more) had any hand, from first to last, in the burning of *London*. They that are for the affirmative, think they have much reason on their side, because one was, by Order of Law, executed upon that account; and the proof against him, no lesse than his own Confession (both in publick and private) in which he long persisted, though he knew full well the danger of it. Now, who but a mad man, would confess himself guilty, of so hainous and odious a crime which he had never committed? And on the other hand, had he been mad, his Judge and Jury wanted not wisedom and diligence sufficient, by one means or other, to discover it: neither had they so little Justice and Conscience, as to have convicted and condemned him, for ought he had said against himself, if it had been evident to them, he had not been himself, or, as they call it, *Mentis Compos*.

pos. Moreover, ſay they, This muſt needs have been done, either by Over-ſight, or by Treachery, or by Miracle. We hear not of the leaſt umbrage of any over-ſight, or careleſſneſſe in any of the Family where the fire began, (which doubtleſſe hath been narrowly lookt into): ſo that if we reject the ſecond, we muſt reſt in the third, *viz.* That it was done by a miraculous, that is, by an immediate Hand of Heaven, which, ſince the time that miracles have generally ceaſed, ſeems far leſs probable, than it is, that that ſhould be true, which a man, that, for ought could be made appear, was in his right wits, did confeſſe againſt his own life.

But grant it were ſo, that the firſt fireing of any part of *London*, were wilfully done, by that miſerable Wretch, who took it upon himſelf and was executed for it, Will it follow from thence, that the Hand of God was not viſible upon it? Yea, all things conſidered, if *Pharaoh*'s Magicians had been then alive and preſent, they would have ſaid, *This was the* Finger of God, as they ſaid in another caſe, when it was undeniable. For, firſt of all, Who but the great God, withheld Rain for ſo many weeks before, and ſent ſo great a Drought, as did make the houſes ready to take fire, like ſo much Tinder? Who brought the wind out of his Treaſures, and made it blow ſo fiercely for ſeveral days together, as if it had been on purpoſe to augment and ſpread thoſe flames like mighty bellows? Who that had begun that fire, could foreſee the wind would continue ſo long to carry on his work, and not ſuffer thoſe flames to be extinguiſhed as other fires have been? Who dried up the Springs, that when men came to dig for water in ſeverall Streets,

Streets, little could be had, where uſed to be plenty at other times? By whoſe Providence came it to paſſe, that the Engines, which uſed to be ſerviceable in ſuch caſes, were at that time, moſt of them out of kelter, and unfit for uſe? Who took away ſpirit and courage from men, that they were at that time (above all the reſt) like ſilly Doves without heart, and, contrary to their uſuall manner, did generally apply themſelvs, not to extinguiſhing the fire, but unto removing their goods, (even ſuch as were competently remote) as if they had given all for loſt at the firſt daſh. Who hid counſell from mens eyes, that ſo obvious and effectuall a way, as that of Blowing up of houſes to ſtop the increaſe of fire, was not ſooner thought of? Or, if it were, that it was no ſooner put in Execution? I ſay, Who but the great God did all theſe things? Who cauſed the fire to burn fiercely, as well againſt the wind as with it? Diſown Providence in this, and you will diſown it every where. If there were ſomething of the hand of man in it, doubtleſſe, there was more of the hand of God.

But yet, more do they intitle the Providence of God to this fire, who ſeem confident, there was nothing of Treachery or Deſign in it. For, if they think it came in an ordinary way (but unintendedly); things that ſo happen, are in Scripture more eſpecially put upon God's account. It is ſaid of him that killed a man accidentally, and without any purpoſe ſo to do, that *God had delivered him into his hands*, Exod. 21. 13. Moreover, when things that come by accident, or, without humane contrivance, ſo fall out, as if all things had been laid and prepared for ſuch a purpoſe, in ſuch

ſuch caſes the Divine Providence is moſt viſible and conſpicuous. Now manifeſt it is, that if a Councill of Jeſuits had laid their heads together, how they might burn *London* to the ground, they could not have choſen, either a fitter time, or place. Not a fitter time, in reſpect of the great Drought that had been, and wind that then was; nor yet a fitter place, conſidering the vicinity of it, to the great magazine of Combuſtible Materials, to wit, Pitch, Tar, Oils, Hemp, and Powder it's ſelf: (viz. *Thames*-ſtreet). Moreover, how near was it to the Water-houſes, the burning down of which places, was juſt like a ſubtle Enemy his ſeizing upon ſome conſiderable Forts, which might otherwiſe ſtand in his way, and obſtruct his deſign. It makes me think of what is ſpoken, *Pſal.* 78. 50. how that *God did make a way to his anger*, as if he would have nothing to hinder the paſſage of it: And, upon the whole, I cannot but recount thoſe words of God, by his Prophet, to the Jews, *Jer.* 18. 11. *Behold, I frame evil againſt you, and deviſe a device againſt you*: for methinks it apppeareth like a Deſtruction wiſely framed and deviſed.

But, as for ſuch, as think it came neither by Treachery, nor by Caſualty, they muſt needs aſcribe it to meer Providence, and to nothing elſe; not onely to God, but to God alone, like the burning of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, or, of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. So that, let men derive the pedigree of this fire whence they will (as there are three conjectures about it) they cannot exclude the Providence of God from having ſignally appeared in it. It is a ſign the great God is not aſhamed of what he hath done, and that he cares not who knows it:

For,

For, how eaſie had it been for him, to have contrived the burning of *London* in ſuch a way, as that himſelf might ſcarce have been ſeen in it, that men would generally have thought, it had been the hand of Man, and not of God, any more than every thing elſe is: But now, methinks it is, as if the great God had ſaid, If any man ask, Who ſet *London* on fire? let the Circumſtances tell them, It was I, that did it.

Surely, ſomething is the matter, that God ſhould, as it were, glory, in making known, that he it was that ſet *London* on fire: Was it not to ſhow, that he had a Controverſie with us? Might it not be alſo, leſt his governing of the World ſhould be called in queſtion, if ſo great a thing ſhould have hapned, to all appearance, by meer chance and fortune? Was it not alſo to make us ſtoop, and ſubmit to ſo great a loſs, upon ſuch an accompt, as *David* did, when he ſaid, *I held my peace, becauſe thou Lord didſt it*: Or, Might it not be alſo, to tell us, That he challengeth to himſelf juſt Power and Authority, to burn up great Cities at his pleaſure; and, *Who ſhall ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?* As *Lebanon* is ſaid, not to be ſufficient for him to burn; ſo neither was *London* more than ſufficient: O *London*, Diſdain not to fall by that hand by which thou art fallen: It was not that poor Miſcreant, that ended his dayes at *Tyburn*, that did, or could, by his own power deſtroy thee (though poſsibly he may be ſomewhere Canonized for the Saint that did it.) If God had not firſt dried thee, he, and a hundred more, could never have burnt thee: If he kindled the fire, it would have gone out again, if God had not blowed the coal: It was he that ſaith, *Behold, I ſhake heaven and earth*: It is

he

he that can take hold of the Pillars of the Univerſe, and tumble it down when he pleaſeth: It is he, that in proceſſe of time, will ſerve the whole World as he ſerved thee: It was he, I ſay, that bid thee come down and lie in the duſt. Humble thy ſelf under his mighty hand; He can raiſe thee up again, *and make thee a Princeſſe among the Nations*, when *Paris* and *Rome* may chance to lie in Aſhes.

MEDITATION XVII.

Upon the burning of the Seſſions-houſe in the Old-Baily.

WHat a rebuke is it to the Cenſoriouſneſſe of men, who are ready to charge *London* with greater ſins than other places are guilty of, becauſe this great Judgment fell upon it. I ſay, what a rebuke is it to them, to behold the moſt eminent ſeat of Juſtice in all thoſe parts, conſumed by the ſame fire? Who dare, or who truly can, in this caſe, apply thoſe words of *Solomon*, *Eccleſ.* 3. 16. *I ſaw under the Sun the place of Judgment that Wickedneſſe was there, and the place of Righteouſneſſe that Iniquity was there?* For amidſt all the complaints of men about other matters, and particular diſtaſtes they have taken at particular perſons or paſſages, I do not know that man, that will deny, that there is as much of Law and Conſcience to be found amongſt the Reverend Judges, which are at this day, as amongſt the Judges of any Time and Age whatſoever: The conſideration whereof, may be no ſmall comfort to the poor Citizens, whoſe difficult Caſes, relating to the

the fire are like to lie in their breaſts, and be ſubjected to their wiſe determination (which, I hope, will be ſuch, as may abundantly confirm that honourable Character, which I think, but juſtice to give concerning them).

Yet was that honourable and moſt eminent place of their Seſſions, within the City burnt amongſt the reſt. How commodious was that place for their work; for that it was ſcituate near to the great Den of Theeves, and Receptacle of Felons: (*Newgate* I mean) it being requiſite, that Juſtice and Sin ſhould not dwell far aſunder, but, that the former ſhould, as it were, tread upon the heels of the latter. From thence had many Malefactors received ſentence to be deſervedly executed, but now the place it ſelf, which (for what cauſe we know not) had received an unexpected ſentence in heaven, had it executed accordingly, and came to an untimely end, yet had it ſtood ſo long, as to acquire the name of Old, being called the *Old-Baily*, and, as one Author thinks, was a Court of Juſtice, for ſome purpoſes above three hundred years ſince, *viz.* in the year 1356. And what more than Old or very Old can be attributed to any Creature upon earth, in point of duration, none of which, in this world, ſhall be perpetual (for that is more than the world it ſelf ſhall be.) The Apoſtle telling us, that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved. When places of Juſtice are deſtroyed, perhaps Malefactors will rejoyce, (though they have little cauſe; for change of place will no whit mitigate their puniſhment) but all true and honeſt men will be ſorry. May there nere want a place, in which to try and arraign Malefactors (in caſe there be any ſuch) but much

rather do I wiſh, there might no more be any Malefactors deſerving to be tried.

MEDITATION. XVIII.

Upon the Gates and Priſons of London, *that were burnt.*

COncerning thoſe, that uſe an after care, and provide too late, our Proverb is, *That when the Steed is ſtolen, they ſhut the Stable door* : but the fire, when it had ſtollen the Steed, I mean deſtroyed the City, flung open the Gates, or rather demoliſhed and ruinated ſeverall of them. (Gates without a City being as inſignificant, and to as little purpoſe, as a City without Gates is unſafe.) Yet had thoſe Gates been ſtanding, which are not (I mean in ſtrength and perfection) it might have carried a good Omen and Preſage with it, as if they had been left to encloſe and ſecure a City, which ſhould afterwards be built (though there were ſcarcely any for them to ſecure at preſent ;) but we truſt through divine goodneſs, the ſame thing will be done (but with more charge) without that Omen. No man can tell where deſtruction will begin or where it will make an end, for that ſometimes it makes an end, where uſually it begins. Deſtruction uſually aſſaults the Gates of a City firſt, and then the City it ſelf ; the loſs of the Gates doth generally prove the loſing of the City : but, in this caſe, the loſing of the City firſt, proved the loſs of the Gates at laſt : The fire went out of the City by the Gates, but it came not in that way. There are famous Gates for Death and Miſery to enter in by, which are all we

we look at, generally; and, if they be but ſhut, we think our ſelves ſecure; (alaſs! but too ſecure are we in one ſenſe, for thinking ſo,) ſith Death and Miſery have ſo many ſecret in-lets which we know not of; and can make a way, where they ſcarce find any. We thought, if *London* had been deſtroyed, (as now it is,) it muſt have been by ſome powerful enemy, viſibly entring in at its Gates; but, little did we think of what one ſpake in another caſe; That, there was ἔνδον τὸ κακὸν, ſome ſuch inviſible evils, or enemies within us, as were ſufficient to deſtroy it in this faſhion: Alaſs! When can we conclude our ſelves ſafe in this World?

Beſides that great Ornament which thoſe ſtately Gates, that were burnt, added to the City, and the great Defence which they afforded thereunto, (as to enemies from without,) Were they not alſo very ſerviceable, as they were the fitteſt places, in reference to their impregnable ſtrength, whereof to make Goales and Priſons; (neither are there any Houſes more neceſſary than they,) ſo long as there are many lewd People, whom no other places but ſuch can keep within compaſs; for whom Priſons are as needful, as Chimneys are for fire: which, ſet at liberty, would put all into a flame: But now came an unexpected Goal-delivery, better to many poor Priſoners, than they looked for: but, to Capital-Offenders not ſo good, as it is like, they did hope it would have proved. When notorious Felons heard of this, probably they did hope, it would break open the doors of their ſeveral Priſons, and ſet them free: but, all they got by it, was, only a Newer-*Newgate*, or to be removed from one Goal to another: But, poor Men, that

were in for Debt only, as in *Lud-gate*, &c. poſsibly they were in a pannick-fear they ſhould have been burnt in the Priſons where they were, not knowing how to make an eſcape: But, if I miſtake not, they were releaſed in the time of the fire, which had left but room enough for Offenders of a higher nature: So was the Proverb verified, that, *It is an ill-Wind that blowes no body any good*: So was the Fire more merciful to them than their Creditors: ſo were their fears converted into joy. Is it not worth mentioning, How that *Cannibal*-fire did firſt roaſt, and then devour thoſe Quarters of human fleſh, which upon thoſe Gates were expoſed to the Fowls of the Air; robbing them of their prey, and burying them in the duſt much ſooner than was expected: Now may it be ſaid, That the Gates of *London*, as of old, That the Gates of *Sion* did mourn. We little thought the time had been ſo near, when the Security of *London* ſhould not conſiſt ſo much in its Gates and Walls, (I ſay, its Security, as from a forraign Enemy: for, *Nullus ad amiſſas ibit opes*,) as in its un-enviable Ruins and Poverty.

MEDITATION XIX.

Upon the Conflagration of the Univerſe.

IT is evident by Scripture, that the *Heavens and the earth* (which are now) *are reſerved unto fire againſt the day of Judgement*, 2 Pet. 3. 7. And, *That in the day of God* (as it is called,) *the heavens, being on fire, ſhall be diſſolved; and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat*, Verſ. 12. *Yea, the heavens ſhall paſſe away with a great noiſe; the earth alſo, and the works*

that

that are thereof ſhall be burnt up, Verſ. 10. Some think, that fire ſhall only refine, and purifie, not conſume and deſtroy: But, beſides that the expreſſions of the *heavens* their *being diſſolved, and paſſing away*; and that of the *earth*, its being *burnt up*, ſeem to import more, than a bare purifying of both, or either of them: Why ſhould we think the World it ſelf ſhould laſt, when all the Inhabitants of it ſhall be removed into another World? Surely, the World will be of no further uſe, when there ſhall be no one Man or Woman to Inhabit it, and to adore God in, and for it: God made the World for Mans uſe, and therefore will unmake it again, when Man hath no further uſe for it; (as Men uſe to pull down Tents, when they have no further occaſion for them.) The World is but Gods Nurſery, (ſuch a thing I mean as *Gardiners* uſe to call by that name,) from whence he means to tranſplant all he there ſets; and, when that is done, he will pull down his fences, and let it run to ruin: Yea, he will lett-in fire as a wild Bore, that ſhall deſtroy it. Whoſoever believes that God made the World, cannot but think he is able to deſtroy it; for that it ſeems much eaſier of the two, to bring ſomething to nothing, than to bring ſomething out of nothing. What a ſolemn time will that be, when the whole world ſhall be in flames? What a petty, puny fire was that which burnt up *London*, to that which ſhall conſume the whole world? For what was *London* to *England*? What is *England*, in compariſon of all the Earth? Or what is the whole Earth, in compariſon of the Globe of Heaven, which conſiſts of innumerable Stars, ſome one of which, is far bigger than the ſurface of the whole Earth? Surely, the fiering of

one City, was but a blaze, to what the burning of the whole Fabrick of Heaven and Earth will be. We have ſeen great things, in reference to this Fire, ſuch as our Fathers never ſaw; but theſe are nothing, to what, both we, and they ſhall ſee at the Great Day. Though I cannot conceive, what kind of fire it ſhould be, that might be able to diſſolve the Heavens and melt the Elements; yet will I believe the matter of things contained in Scripture, though I cannot reach the manner, how ſuch things ſhould be. He that can withhold fire from conſuming that which is in it's ſelf Combuſtible, can make thoſe things Combuſtible, which, in their own nature are not ſo, or rather, can inable fire to conſume them. God, by ſetting fire upon the whole World, will let us ſee, He can ſpare it. He is Conſcious to his own power, that he can make another World when he pleaſeth, yea, as many Worlds as now there are Stars. He was infinitely happy before he made the World, (which, in compariſon of Himſelf was but of yeſterday, for what is ſix thouſand years to Eternity?) and He will Be ſtill, when the world ſhall be no more. He was Light to himſelf, when, as yet, there were no Sun, Moon, and Stars; yea, he was Light it's ſelf, ſo he is, and ſo he will be, when all thoſe lights ſhall be put out. We cannot better afford, to burn a Ruſh-candle till we have burnt it out, (or, when that is done, miſſe it leſſe) than he can, to burn up the Sun it's ſelf and to diſfurniſh all the Stars of their borrowed light.

God looks upon this world, as that which is too good for wicked men alwayes to enjoy, but not good enough for his Children alwayes to continue in (*Of whom the world is not worthy*, Heb. 11.)

and

and ſo being not fit, to be the eternal Manſion, either of the one, or of the other, hath reſolved, that when it hath ſerved to the end, for which it was made, it ſhall be burnt: His Friends ſhall have better Manſions, his Enemies ſhall not have ſo good: How ſoon the Conflagration of the World ſhall be, Who can tell? God prefixed the time in which he would deſtroy the firſt World, *viz.* within a hundred and twenty years after warning given, but hath not done ſo by this. *Of that day and hour knows no man; no, not the Son of man* (*viz.* as man.) It may be nearer at hand, than we are aware of: The ends of the world ſeem to be upon us: If Saint *John*, and others contemporary with him, called the time wherein they lived, *The laſt time*, 1 *John* 2. 18. *Heb.* 1. 2. 2 Pet. 3. ?. What may this be called? Well might the Pſalmiſt ſay, *This their way is their folly*, of them, whoſe inward thought was, that their Houſe and Lands ſhould continue for ever, *Pſalm* 49. 11. whereas, alas, the world it ſelf ſhall not do ſo. Were they ſecure, that were told, The world ſhould be drowned, at the end of a hundred and twenty years, and would not regard; and are not we, that know the world ſhall be burnt, and that, for ought we know, within half that time, or leſs, and yet are not affected with it? Ought not the very thoughts of that burning, to be as a fiery Chariot, to convey our minds from earth to heaven? Ought it not to quench our affections to the world, as one heat puts out another; ſo the heat of the Sun puts out the Fire. I obſerve Saint Peter to ſay, that *The earth and the works that are thereof, ſhall be burnt*, by which, I ſuppoſe, he means the works of Art (becauſe he ſpeaks of none of the works of heaven,

which are all natural) ſuch as are, ſtrong Towers, ſtately Pallaces, famous Cities, and ſuch like. Now the day in which that ſhall be done (ſaith he) *ſhall come upon the world as a thief in the night*, that is, ſuddenly, and unexpectedly. Nor know I, what better uſe can be made of the doctrine of the Worlds intended Deſtruction by fire, than that which we read, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. *Seeing then, that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, What manner of perſons ought we to b, in all holy converſation and godlineſs?*

MEDITATION XX.

Upon the Fire of Hell.

WHo can think on the late dreadfull fire without ſome ſerious reflections on the more dreadful fire of hell? If that *Tophet* which is ſpoken of, *Iſa.* 30. 33. be the ſame with Hell, methinks the deſcription of it is ſuch, as doth not a little agree with our late fire, *The pile thereof* (ſaith the Prophet) *is much wood, the breath of the Lord, like a ſtream of brimſtone, doth kindle it.* Was not the pile of our late fire much wood, of Churches, Houſes, and other Structures? and did not the wind (which may be called the breath of the Lord) ſo kindle it, or rather, increaſe it, as if it had been a mighty ſtream of Brimſtone poured in upon it? Some are not more hard to believe there is a Hell (a Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is, The ſecond death) than they would have been, to believe, that any ſuch fire, ſhould, or could have fallen upon *London*, as that which lately did. If more dreadful things than we could imagine, do happen unforetold, (as the late

late Judgement for one); Why ſhould we think thoſe incredible, which the Scripture plainly ſpeaks of, though they far tranſcend our imagination, and what we ſhould otherwiſe expect? Nothing can make the burning of *London*, and the miſery attending it, ſeem ſmall, but, to conſider the fire of Hell, and the miſery of the damned; and that conſidered, this doth even vaniſh and diſappear before it. For, What is a fire of four days continuance, to that which ſhall laſt more millions of millions of Ages, than there are minutes in the ſpace of four dayes and nights? Or, What is a fire, preying upon Houſes and Goods, to that, which ſhall prey upon Bodies and Souls; as Chriſt hath commanded us, to *Fear him, who can caſt ſoul and body into hell.* If one Soul be (as it is) more worth than many worlds, how much leſſe is one City worth than many thouſand ſouls? Neither is Hel an uncompounded torment, conſiſting of fire onely; but there are other ingredients, to make the miſery of it more unſufferable: *There is the worm that ſhall never die, there is the darkneſſe that ſhall never end.* There is the heat of fire to Torment, but not the light of fire to Refreſh. Oh the demerit of ſin, that fire, which of it's ſelf is ſo intolerable a torment, ſhould not be thought ſufficient to puniſh it! Shall I dread fire alone (ſuch as that which befell the City) and ſhall I not dread more ſcorching flames than thoſe, accompanied with a gnawing worm and a perpetual night? I can heartily ſay with that good man, *Hic ure, hic ſeca, Domine; ſed in æternum parce*, Here, O Lord, cut and burn, and do what thou wilt with me; onely ſpare in Eternity. May the conſideration of Hell-fire, not onely deterr me from ſin, but

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alſo kindle love to Chriſt within me, who is therefore called *Jeſus, becauſe he ſhall ſave his people from the wrath to come.*

MEDITATION XXI.

Upon the coming of that moſt dreadful fire in ſo Idolized a year, as 1666.

WHen will men give over groundleſſe prophecying? When will they learn, not to be wiſe above what is written? Did not Chriſt ſay to his Diſciples, *It is not for you to know the times and ſeaſons, which the Father hath put in his own hands.* One ſaid, That an Itch of diſputing was in his time, the ſcab of the Church; and in our time, an Itch of prophecying hath been the ſame thing. According to the manifold propheſies, which have been concerning it, 66. ſhould have been a year of *Jubilee*, I had almoſt ſaid a time of the Reſtitution of all things, but, alas! Whilſt men lookt for light, behold darkneſs, whilſt they cried Peace, peace, greater deſtruction then ever, was coming upon them. It is ſaid, that *God hath ſet one over againſt the other to the end that man ſhould find nothing after him.* Eccleſ. 7. 14. If it be the glory of God to conceal a matter (as the Scripture ſaith, it is) why will men pretend to know what God intends to do? Who can tell, what the womb of a day, much more of a year will bring forth? If women that are with child know not what they go with, whether male or female, wiſe or fooliſh, who can tell what is in the womb of Providence? Such as pretend to foreknow future contingencies, are not more admired for their wiſdom before the time be expired, than they are uſu-

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ally condemned for their folly and preſumption, when the event proves otherwiſe. We read in Jer. 23. 28. *There were prophets of the deceit of their own hearts. VVhich cauſe the people to forget the name of God by the dreams, which they tell every one to his neighbour.* Therefore, ſaith God, *The prophet which hath a dream, let him tell a dream, and he that hath my word let him ſpeak my word faithfully. VVhat is the chaff to the wheat?* We ſay proverbially, Old Birds cannot be caught with chaff, yet a great many are with ſuch chaff as the prophet ſpeaks of, meaning falſe Predictions: many of which ſhould by right have been written in Hebrew Characters, for that the event ſhews they were to be read backwards, like the preſages of Almanack-makers concerning weather, who frequently tell us, it will be fair when it proves foul, and foul when it proves very fair.

The Devil himſelf is more tender of his credit than many men have bin of theirs: for it was always his manner to deliver Oracles in Ambiguous expreſſions, that, whatſoever the event were, he might not be charged with falſhood; whereas men (that know leſs) have ventur'd to ſpeak as plainly and poſitively as could be, touching things to come, which falling out quite contrary have filled their faces with ſhame. If that had been the worſt, it had been no great matter: but, alas! men have not only wounded their own reputations by their daring falſe propheſies, but by accuſtoming themſelves and others, to believe and disbelieve again, have greatly propagated Atheiſm in the world, and made the abuſed credulity of many to end in infidelity. They that have been often deceived, become always jealous, and uſe to ſay, Alas! whom

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or what can we truſt? Though there be no reaſon in the world that men ſhould ſuſpect the Word of God becauſe they have been fruſtrated by the dreams of men; I cannot deny but that there are and have been ſtrong impreſſions from God upon the minds of ſome men concerning future things, but, as the Apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, Haſt thou faith, have it to thy ſelf before God: ſo in this caſe though they themſelves cannot but believe the things which are ſo impreſſed upon them, yet let them keep that faith to themſelves, and not expect others ſhould believe the ſame things, unleſs by miracles they could prove themſelves to be Prophets ſent of God; or till ſuch time as the event ſhall ſhew they were not miſtaken. A propheſie may indeed and in truth ſignifie much to him that utters it, which yet may ſignifie nothing at all to them that hear it, becauſe he may have received it from God, whereas others have received it but from himſelf. As to all the prophecies concerning great, good things, which ſhould befall *England* in Sixty ſix, be it to themſelves upon what grounds they have had ſuch expectations; ſure I am, nothing hath yet appeared that looks like a fulfilling of them, though the year be almoſt expired. He that foretold that *Cæſar* ſhould die upon ſuch a day, *Cæſar* ſending him word the day was come, and he was yet alive, made anſwer that day was come, but it was not paſt & gone, and die he did upon that day; So ſome it may be will tell us that Sixty ſix is come, and far ſpent, but not quite paſt and gone. 'Tis very true, and ſo long as one day or hour of that year laſts, let them lengthen out their hopes. If it produce what they have foretold, I ſhall not envy them the honor of proving true Prophets: but if it

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end as it hath begun, and held on hitherto; give me leave to ſay, that meer humane Predictions touching future Contingencies ought never to be truſted more; and that the fruſtrations of Sixty ſix, ſhould aboliſh or prevent the credulitie of all after-ages.

There is a Text or two, which I ſuppoſe, many do build upon, who have great regard to humane propheſies. We read, ſay they, that the *Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, Pſalm 25. 14. But that muſt not be underſtood, as if God did make them that fear him acquainted with all his Secrets: for it is ſaid of Chriſt himſelf, conſidered as man, that *Of that day and hour*, ſpeaking of the day of Judgment, *knows not the ſon of man himſelf*. Moreover, ſay they, in *Amos* 3. 7. it is written, *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his ſecrets unto his ſervants the Prophets*. Yea, but where are ſuch Prophets to be found in theſe dayes as were in thoſe, *viz.* Approved of God amongſt men by miracles, ſigns, and wonders, as is ſaid of Chriſt, *Acts* 2. 22? Doth not Experience ſhew, that the Gift of prophecying (as thereby is meant the infallible predicting of things) is either wholly, or for the moſt part at an end, as well as ſeveral other Gifts, which were intended but for the infancy of the Church: If it be ſaid, that it is written, *In the laſt dayes, your young men ſhall ſee viſions, and your old men ſhall dream dreams, your ſons and daughters ſhall propheſie*, it is evident, from *Acts* 3. 16. that that was fulfilled in the Apoſtles time: for, ſaith *Peter*, when the Holy Ghoſt was poured out upon the Diſciples, when they were filled with the Holy Ghoſt and ſpake with other Tongues, *This is that which was ſpoken by* Joel, *I will*

will poure out my ſpirit upon all fleſh, and they ſhall propheſie, &c. But, it is further ſaid, that the predictions of ſome good men, have come to paſſe, they have hit right (as they call it). That may be too, and yet ſuch as they may be no Prophets to us, that is, no ſuch Prophets as we are bound to believe, till the Event have declared, that they themſelves were not deceived. : It may not be alwayes from Divine Revelation, that men propheſie rightly concerning things to come : A man may draw a Bow at an adventure, and ſhoot at random, and yet happen to hit the mark, though he that ſhall do ſo, will miſſe it much oftner. Now, as one ſaith, *Men mind when predictions hit, not when they miſſe*, and that is the reaſon, they give ſo much heed to them : Whereas indeed, as in predicting of weather, when it ſhall be fair, and when it ſhall be fowl; ſo in other things, though menſpeak but what comes next it is almoſt as hard to be alwayes out, as it is to be alwayes right.

How fain would I prevail with men not to lean upon the broken Reed of uncertain Prophecies? *Whereon, if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce him* (as was ſaid of *Egypt*) *Iſa.*36.6. Pierce you they will, more wayes than one; as namely, With ſhame, when you ſee your confidence diſappointed: With ſorrow, when you ſee your hopes fruſtrated: With reproach, when others ſhall deride you, and ſay, Is this the good time you lookt for? Is this the Deliverance you expected? What now is become of all your Prophecies, touching what would be ſuch and ſuch a year? All this Reproach you might ſave, if you would believe no more than what the Scripture warrants you to believe :

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Where doth that ſpeak of the glorious things that ſhall be in the year 1666? or, give you to expect more from that, than from any other year? Are not Divine-Promiſes ſufficient for your comfort, unleſs you eake them out with human Prophecies, (as the Papiſts do the Counſels of Scripture, with the Traditions of men:) It is well, if ſome do not derive more comfort from fallible Predictions, than from the infallible Word. Is not *the Name of the Lord a ſtrong Tower*? Why then will you betake your ſelves to a *refuge of lies*? It is enough for poor deluded *Jews* to be alwayes comforting themſelves with one vain Prophecy or other, (as they are obſerved to be ſeldom without:) but, it is below *Chriſtians* ſo to do, who have a ſure Word of Prophecy; which they ſhould take heed to, *as to a light ſhining in a dark place*. Be confident, Faith, and Credulity are very different things: The firſt builds upon a Rock; the laſt upon Quick-ſands. Believe, but be not Credulous; many credulous people make many falſe Prophets, (as they ſay Receivers make Thieves:) There will never want people to make Propheſies, ſo long as there are enough to entertain them, and to truſt upon them. Jer. 5.31. *The Prophets propheſie falſely, and the People love to have it ſo.* There are too many, that ſay in their hearts, *Si populus vult decipi decipietur*: If People will be deceived, they ſhall. Many ſmall Prophets, in this, and other ages, ſeem Merchant-adventurers for a little credit; They will be the Authors of a Prediction right or wrong; it is fit it be pleaſing, whether it be true or no: If it come to paſs, they ſhall have a great deal of credit by it; and, in the mean time, it makes them to be ſomewhat more taken notice of; and, if it be fruſtrated,

they

they are not the first that were mistaken, there have been, and are many false Prophets besides themselves: When shall I see men so modest, as to tell their uncertain Predictions, as their Dreams, not as heavenly Dictates; in their own names, and not in the Name of God, saying, *Thus saith the Lord*: but rather, My mind bodes me so and so; Thus saith my imagination, and I cannot withstand it. At leastwise when shall I see others so wise as to hearken to them, only as such, and upon no other account till experience have proved them to be more than so. It is time enough to believe a humane Prophesie when you see it fulfilled; and you pay it a sufficient respect, if, in the mean time, you suspend your judgment, and forbear to censure it. O *Sixty-six*! Thou center of human Propheſies! Thou Ocean, into which all the Rivers of Conjectural Predictions did run! If I live to see thee end, as thou hast continued hitherto; for thy sake, if for nothing else (yet, upon other considerations too,) if men will find confidence to make a thousand Prophecies, no wayes countenanced by Scripture, I shall not find Faith to believe one of them.

MEDITATION XXII.

Upon the fire, it's beginning on the Lords-Day in the Morning.

WAs there nothing in the Circumstance of Time, in which that fire began, *viz.* upon the *Lords*-Day? *Doth not Providence determine the times before-appointed, as well as the bounds of our habitations*? Acts 17.26. Might not *Herod* read his sin

ſin in the time in which the Angel of God ſmote him, and the Worms received a commiſsion to eat him up? which was immediately after he had received that Acclamation from the People, ſaying, *It is the voice of God, and not of man*, Acts 12. 23. Neither can I think it was without its ſignification, that *London* began to burn upon the *Lords-Day*. Were not the *Sabbath-Dayes*-ſins of *London* greater, than its ſins upon other dayes; it being a certain truth, that, if mens actions be evil, the better day, the worſe action; as, in caſe they be good, The better day, we ſay, the better deed? Juſtly might ſuch a fire have hapned, had it been only to puniſh the uſual profanations of the *Lords-Day*. How many had been playing on that very day, if, by this ſad providence, they had not been ſet at work? How many had been then imployed in ſervile, and (at that time) unlawful Works, if ſuch a work of Mercy, and Charity, as was delivering themſelves and their ſubſtance from the fire, had not been put upon them? How many had then been exerciſing themſelves *in Gluttony and Drunkenneſs*; *in Rioting and Chambering*; *in Filthineſs and Uncleanneſs*; if the care of preſerving themſelves and their Goods had not diverted them? How many, that followed their honeſt Labours all the Week, had wont to find their ſinful pleaſures on the *Lords-Day*?

Alaſs! That the Day, which God at firſt bleſſed, as well as ſanctified, ſhould then be curſed, (if I may ſo call it,) above any other dayes that went before it: That *Londoners* ſhould have the moſt reſtleſs Day that ever they had generally had, both as to Body and Mind; of that, which was at firſt appointed for a Day of Reſt: On that Day, in

which God began to Create the World, in the firſt Day of the Week did he begin to deſtroy that great City: Yea, The Day of *Chriſt* his Reſurrection, was the firſt Day of *London*'s Death and Burial. Did not good Men hope to have been Praying, Hearing, Singing of *Pſalms*; Eating and Drinking, in remembrance of *Chriſt*, on that very day, in which they were forced to be quenching of Houſes, carrying out of Goods, conveying away their Wives and Children? How ſadly were Churches filled on that Day, not with Men and Women, (as upon other ſuch Dayes,) but with Wares and Houſhold-ſtuff? And, How much more ſadly were they emptied, ſome of them, on that very Day; not by exportation, but by conflagration? Poor *Londoners* carried their Goods to ſeveral Churches, to ſacrifice them to flames, (as it proved,) though with an intention to have ſecured them; thoſe places proving Sepulchres, which they repaired to as Sanctuaries.

O fatal, and never to be forgotten Sabbath! No emblem, as other of thoſe dayes, of that reſt, which glorious Saints injoy in Heaven; but rather of the day of Judgment, which is called, *The great and terrible day of the Lord*: *Black-Sunday*, ſome will call it; (as formerly there was much diſcourſe of a *Black-Monday*:) That was expected, and came not; this was not expected, and yet it came, *like a thief in the night*. I doubt not but men went to their beds over-night as ſecurely as ever they had done in their lives: yea, thoſe that dwelt in the houſe where it firſt began, and ſlept as ſoundly, for the time, as ever they uſed to do, not queſtioning but the inſuing-Sabbath would be like all the reſt; but when the early morning began to fall-in-travel with

with that un-lookt-for-evil, which it was big with; when it began to cry out with a very lowd and doleful out-cry: How did it awaken them, with a witneſs, and make them call all their Neighbours round about them; and, in a few hours give a dreadful Alarme to the whole City. That *Lords-Day* was much more a repreſentation of Hell, than of Heaven; though both the Work, and Reſt of the Sabbath, at other times, be a repreſentation of Heaven, not of Hell. I ſee then, how eaſily God can *turn our Bleſsings into Curſes; and, the Songs of the Temple into Howlings*: Amos 8. 3. Not only the *Jews* of old had need to Pray, but we alſo, *That our flight may not be upon the Lords-Day*: For, ſo it was at this time notwithout a real aggravation of the Judgment, (as they eſteem'd it,) who did unfeignedly deſire to have been at that time waiting upon God in his Ordinances, and who know what it is, in effect, to loſe a Sabbath.

MEDITATION XXIII.

Upon the Place where this dreadful fire began, viz. at a Bakers-*Houſe in* Pudding-lane.

METhinks the Burning of *London*, by Means of that obſcure Lane, was like the killing of that great Giant *Goliah*, by a Pibble-Stone, ſlung from the Sling and Arm of little-*David*; or, like the ſlaying of a thouſand *Philiſtims* meerly with the *Jaw-bone of an Aſs*, Judg. 15. 15. Or, like the *throwing down the walls of* Jericho *with the ſound of Rams-horns*. It may be the great God did deſign nothing but Glory to himſelf, in imploying ſo mean and inconſiderable an Inſtrument in the deſtruction of

that great City; but, it looks like a Father's ſpitting in his Daughters face, which would be a puniſhment carrying a ſhew of contempt with it. When that poor Lane was on Fire, I doubt not, but many thought, that other places, of greater note and eminency, would do well enough, as did appear, by removing their goods thither, and no further, (as to *Aldermanbury*, &c.) But, it ought to be conſidered, that Judgments do many times aſcend; and, though they begin at the loweſt round of the Ladder, yet they do not make an end till they have climbed up to the very top. Though this Fire began with a *Bakers*-Houſe, yet its ambition, (if I may ſo phraſe it,) was not ſatisfied, till it had conſumed the Houſes of the Chief-Magiſtrates, and the places of greateſt eminency. When God is Correcting Mean-Men, Great-Ones ſhould tremble, and ſeek to make their Peace, leſt the Cup go round. I am deceived, if ſome Perſons of Quality did not die of the laſt years Plague, though it befel the Poor more generally, who were not able to provide for their ſafety by flying: But, when the Judgment is by Fire, great Houſes go to rack as well as ſmall; for, one can no more fly than can the other: Houſes have no wings but thoſe which Fire gives them, when they fly away for good and all, once for all: They eaſily fly by fire, but can never fly from it.

But, Will it yield us nothing of a profitable *Meditation*, that this fire began in a *Bakers*-Houſe? Had the hazardouſneſs of that Calling, as to matter of fire, or careleſneſs of the People, been the cauſe of its beginning there; when the Natural cauſe had been ſo plain, the Moral ground of it had been leſs worth our inquiring: But, I find not any thing

thing of that nature ſo much as ſuſpected; yea, ſome to this day will not believe, that it came to paſs otherwiſe, then by an immediate hand of Providence: Whoſe Incredulouſneſs in one thing is not ſo great, but their Credulity in another is greater, if they think it were fired from Heaven immediately. That it came by any in the Family is not miſtruſted; that it was by His meanes that Confeſſed himſelf Guilty, or by the Treachery of any other, they will not believe: And, if neither of theſe two wayes, there is but a third can be thought of, (and they muſt have a Faith of Miracles, that believe it to have come that way;) and, that is, As Fire came upon *Sodom*, *viz.* from heaven immediately: But, when I conſider where it began, (not to diſpute how, or by whoſe means,) I cannot well over-look a paſſage or two in the Prophet *Hoſeah*; *viz. Hoſ.*7.4. *They are all Adulterers, as an Oven heated by the Baker, who ceaſeth from raiſing after he hath kneeded the dough, untill it be leavened*: Thoſe words contain a part of Gods controverſie with *Ephraim*, that is, with the Ten Tribes, *viz.* Firſt, for their eagerneſs in ſin, they were like a Fiery-Oven, very hot upon their Whoredoms, whether Corporal, or Spiritual. *Secondly*, For their Security in ſin; They were like a *Baker* faſt-aſleep, whilſt his Oven is heating, and his Dough taking Leaven. *Verſ.* 6. *Their Baker ſleepeth all the night, in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire. Thirdly*, For their ſlineſs and ſubtilty, in carrying on their Wickedneſs; making, as if they minded no ſuch thing; like a *Baker*, that ſeems not to regard either his Bread, or his Oven; whereas he hath put Leaven into the one, and Fire into the other, which is all that can be done for the pre-

ſent; and, by that time the Oven is hot enough, and the Bread leavened enough, he will be ſure to wake, and fall to his Buſineſs: Moreover, *Verſ.* 8. We read this paſſage, *Ephraim is a Cake not turned*; Meaning, that as ſuch a Cake is partly bak't, and partly dough; ſo, *Ephraim* did halt betwixt *God* and *Baal*, was of ſeveral Religions, eſpouſing the Religion of thoſe divers People they lived amongſt, as the fore-going words imply; *Ephraim hath mixed himſelf amongſt the People.* Seeing then the *Holy Ghoſt* ſeemeth to ſet forth theſe *Four* things I have mentioned, by Similitudes taken from a *Baker*, and the things he deals in; it can be no wayes improper, from the Circumſtance of place, where the Fire began, *viz.* a *Bakers*-Houſe, to Meditate of thoſe Expreſſions, and to conſider, how far-forth they are applicable to our ſelves. If we have been as a *Cake but half-bak't*, if *burning like a fiery-Oven* with the heat of luſt, and in the mean time ſleeping in ſecurity, *&c.* How juſt was it with God to ſend ſuch a Fire as this upon us? Came it not to awaken us? Though *Bakers* can ſleep quietly when they have put fire in the Oven; yet, if they know there be fire on the Houſ-top, they can take no reſt; Advertiſe them of that, and they will ſtart up preſently, and indeavour to quench it. I thought fit to touch upon both theſe Circumſtances, not as pretending to know the end of God in either of them; (though he, who acteth all things according to the Counſel of his Will, hath a wiſe end; not onely in all his actings, but in all the circumſtances of them;) but rather to ſhow, that *Meditation* is a Plant, that may ſpring out of every Soil; a Fruit, that may grow upon every Tree; which may evidence, That it is not from the barrenneſs of things,

things (which are all big with matter of profitable meditation) but from the naughtineſs of our hearts that we are ſo much ſtrangers to it.

MEDITATION XXII.

Upon the great pity that ought to be extended to Londoners *ſince the fire.*

PIty, is an affection that ſhould ſcarcely be withheld from any that are in great diſtreſs and miſery; but yet is much more due to ſome, then to others. Where no miſery is, there is no room for pity, and where there is nothing but miſery to beſpeak it (as in reference to that Prodigal, who by riotous courſes brought himſelf to husks) there is no cauſe for much. But where merit and miſery go hand in hand, the greateſt yearnings of our moſt tender bowels are called for. God will not take it ill that we pity thoſe whom he thinks fit to puniſh; becauſe one of his great ends in puniſhing ſome, is that he might excite pity and compaſſion in others towards them: I have read that Sir *Thomas Moor* not long before his Execution was deſired to cut his locks, for no other end, as is believed, than leſt his Venerable hoary Fleece ſhould ſtir up too much compaſſion in thoſe that were to be ſpectators at his death. But ſo far is the great God from that, that he had rather we ſhould number the grey heirs of miſery which are upon the heads of men, in order to our pitying of them. To tell, Why the late Inhabitants of *London* are objects of Royal pity, or to move to it, were to diſcourſe, why children under great ſufferings ſhould be compaſsionated by their Parents (For

Kings are Fathers, and Subjects their Sons and Daughters). Whereas the Scripture saith, *Can a mother forget her child, that she should not have compassion on the child of her womb*? and though it adds, *yea, she may*, yet it insinuates that they seldom do or can. What reason Courtiers have to pity Citizens, were easie to alledge; For, Have not Citizens, sometimes had so much pity for them, as that they seemed to have none for themselves? Why should not Citizens be a little in Courtiers books, if some Courtiers have been and are, a great deal in theirs? It is but ingenuity to afford them pity who have given them credit. As for those that lead a Countrey life they know full well that Citizens had wont to be their best Chapmen, and to give them a good price for those commodities, and provisions which they thought too good for themselves, and withall to furnish them with the best things which they stood in need of.

Had *Londoners* been the worst of people the depth of their present misery, compared with the height of their former prosperity had challenged pity and compassion from their very enemies: but if it may be made appear that they were generally as Civil as Religious, as Charitable, and in many other respects as commendable as most people in the world, none but ill natur'd persons can refrain commiserating them, much more rejoyce and triumph in their sufferings. The worst enemies they have in the world must needs confess that no people were generally more Civil and Moral then they. As for Religion, I know there are several standards by which men measure, and judge of that (though indeed, and in truth there is but One, whereby to judge of it, to wit, the Word

Word of God; but if conformity to the duties both of the firſt and ſecond Table, if love to God and to our neighbours (ſo far as men can diſcern) may denominate perſons Religious (as ſurely it is that muſt do it) pure Religion and undefiled did as much abound in *London*, as in any place whatſoever. I meddle not with charity in point of judging (Cenſuring is every where too common) but as for Charity in giving and miniſtring to thoſe that are in want, both of one perſwaſion, and of another, if that be a virtue (as doubtleſs it is) *London* hath been as eminent for it in all times in which ſeveral parties have taken their turns in ſuffering as any place I know. In the ſpace of twenty years and upwards that *England* hath been diſſetl'd by War, it may be thouſands that by the unhappines of the times have been brought to ſtraits and exigences, they and theirs had periſhed, but for the charity of *London*, more than of all other places, whilſt ſome have taken care of the Diſciples of *Paul*, others of *Apollos*, others of *Cephas*, others of *Chriſt* without reſpect to any of thoſe diſtinctions (which beſt became good Chriſtians); and ſo all have been taken care of, more or leſs, by thoſe poor Citizens who are now many of them themſelves become the objects of Charity. *London* will not want for pity, if it be pitied by no more then all, and only thoſe, that firſt and laſt have been pitied and relievedby it, and that now and hereafter will dearly miſs it.

I would not it ſhould grate upon the minds of honeſt Citizens, undone by the fire, to think or ſuſpect that a great many have no pity for them: All good people have, and they that are otherwiſe, have no pity, ſo much as for their own ſouls.

I obſerve they uſe to have moſt pity from God, who have leaſt from men, being withall ſuch as deſerve it. When *Penninah* did ſorely vex *Hannah* to make her fret, becauſe God had ſhut up her womb, *Hannah* throve the better for it; for God lookt upon her affliction, and opened her womb, when her Rival had ſhut up her bowels towards her, 1 *Sam.* 1. 5. When *Shimei* curſed *David* being at that time under trouble from *Abſalom*, *David ſaid*, *It may be the Lord will requite me good for his curſing this day*, 2 Sam. 16. 13. Such as triumph in your miſeries may do you a greater kindneſs then they are aware of, according to that in Prov. 24. 18. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, leſt the Lord ſee it, and turn away his wrath from him.* They that will not look upon you as the objects of their pity, are indeed the objects of yours; For ſo are all they that ſhew themſelves to be neither Chriſtians nor Men: and it is a good preſage, you ſhall not always want pity for that you cannot have it from a great many people whilſt you want it. Pity is that virtue which *Engliſhmen* are famous for, and therefore every *Engliſhman* that is void of it, wants the common virtue and character of his Countrey; and he that hath none to beſtow upon this occaſion, ſeems to have none at all. I know not that man that would not be loath the world ſhould think that he had no commiſeration for the preſent caſe of *London*; and why is it, but, becauſe it would thence follow, that he were of a marvellous ill nature, and unworthy of any pity to be ſhewed to himſelf, even in the greateſt extremity that could befall him. One ſaith, the reaſon why, they that have children are uſually more affectionate, than thoſe that have none

none, is, becauſe their bowels are often called upon. By that reaſon they that have no pity, now when that Affection in men is ſo much called upon are never like to have any. But a pity like that charity which S. *James* ſpeaks of, *Jam.* 2. 15. Is not worth half the words I have uſed. If a brother be naked and deſtitute of daily food, and one ſay unto him, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; Notwithſtanding, he gives him nothing, &c. I ſay a pity like that charity, which yet is more then ſome men have, is little worth. But would men ſhew themſelves truly compaſſionate, toward that deſolated City, and the late miſerable Inhabitants of it, if they have intereſt in heaven, let them pray for the reflouriſhing both of it, & them; if they have intereſt on earth, let them promote it; if they have parts let them adviſe and contrive how it may be effected; if they have Purſes, let them contribute towards it; if they have all of theſe, let them further it all, and every of theſe ways. Call your ſelves Papiſts, Frenchmen, Hectors, any thing, but true Engliſhmen, true Chriſtians, true Proteſtants, if you have no pity for the deſolations of *London*. I doubt not but there are ſome Turks and Jews that have, or would have had, if they had known *London* in it's proſperity, and ſhould now ſee it in it's aſhes. O Lord, If men will not pity the miſeries of *London*, the matter is not great; poſſibly if they did, it might not ſignifie much: onely let Thy bowels yearn towards, and thy repentings be kindled within thee, and Thou (who haſt ſpoken concerning it, to pluck up, and pull down) ſpeak in thy due time, to build, and to plant it.

MEDI-

MEDITATION XXV.

Upon thoſe that have loſt all by the Fire.

WHat ſhall we ſay to them that have loſt all? who tell us, that before the fire, they were worth ſo many hundreds, or, ſo many thouſands, but ſince then, they are worth nothing, yea, worſe than nothing. Surely they ought not to mourn as men without hope. If they were ſometimes as rich as *Job* was at firſt, they cannot be poorer now than he was afterwards. Hatred in God towards men, cannot be known by ſuch Events as thoſe; for *Job*, who was in like caſe, was a Perſon greatly beloved of God. Do they fear that they and theirs ſhall periſh? Not ſo neither, for rather than the Iſraelites ſhould periſh in the Wilderneſs, God gave them bread from Heaven, and waters out of the Rock. Ravens ſhall feed them, if they be ſuch as put their truſt in God, rather than they ſhall famiſh. Some, have no Children; they, it is to be ſuppoſed, may make a good ſhift: others, have bad Children, and what ſhould they do with Eſtates to ſpend upon their luſts? Others, have good Children, and let not them doubt but God will provide for them. Hath the onely wiſe God no wayes whereby to make up your loſſes? Did he not give to *Job*, double for all that which he had taken away from him? and can he not do ſo by you?

Is it your great trouble, that you have loſt all at once? I have heard of one, who having a great number of coſtly Glaſſes, did himſelf break them all at one time, that he might not be diſquieted

time

time after time, by the accidental breaking of them one by one. Had your Eſtates been taken from you by piece-meals, now a part, and then a part, till all had been conſumed, that might have proved more grievous to you; and ſo it hath fared with many men. Will you ſay, All is loſt, becauſe your Eſtates are gone? Know, he that is a Chriſtian indeed, cannot loſe his All, yea, the beſt part of what he hath, cannot be loſt, as is ſaid of *Mary*, that *ſhe had choſen that good part, which could not be taken from her.* I have heard of a good Woman, who, when her Children died, had wont to comfort herſelf with this, to wit, that The Lord liveth; who, being more than ordinarily dejected for the death of one of her Children, that ſhe had a more particular affection for; a Child that had obſerved what ſhe had wont to ſay, and how full of heavineſs ſhe then was, came to her and ſaid, Mother, Is the Lord dead? How may the words of that Child, upbraid the carriage of thoſe Chriſtians, who mourn over their loſſes, as if they had not an Everliving God to rejoyce in? Is it ſtrange to you to be poor, who have heretofore always enjoyed riches and plenty? know, that it is one point of a Chriſtians Excellency and heavenly Skill, to be able to act ſeveral and different parts well, as *Paul* ſaith, *I have learned how to abound, and how to want, how to be full, and how to be empty; how, in every Eſtate therewithall to be content.* They are unſound bodies, that can onely bear the Summer, but not alſo the Winter, Spring and Autumne. You ſay, you have nothing now, How many are there, that never had any thing, to ſpeak of? Is it no mercy or priviledge, to have enjoyed good things for a long time paſt, though we may not enjoy them alwayes?

wayes? If men have had good ſight, good hearing, good health, till they come to be old, and then all of theſe begin to decay, or be quite loſt, do they, or ought they, to reckon it no mercy that they have enjoyed theſe things ſo long? If you ſay, you cannot live upon nothing (that is, nothing certain) how many hundreds, yea, thouſands, are, thorough the goodneſs of God, provided for from year to year, who have no certainty to live upon? Now you have loſt the things you had, poſſibly you will thereby be excited, to look after the things which can never be loſt, which otherwiſe, it may be, you had never done. Hath the fire conſumed your money, or money-worth, as if it had all been but ſo much droſs, this, peradventure, may make you look after that gold, tried in the fire, which no fire can conſume, and then, your unſpeakable loſs will prove inconceivable gain. What great difference, between the worlds leaving us, and our leaving it? You muſt ſhortly have left it, if it had not firſt left you.

Truſt God, and doubt not but he will bear your charges thorough the world, and more of this world you need not care for. What a noiſe will this make in the world, that you have loſt all, and who, that hath any thing to ſpare, if they know your caſe, will not contribute to your relief? You have yet the Love of relations and friends, the Charity of men, the Fruit of your own ingenuity, and induſtry, the Bounty of heaven, the Reſult of Divine Promiſes, all theſe things you have, beſides ſeveral others, to help and ſuccour you; therefore, ſay not, You are undone, though all be loſt for the preſent. How many have, from a fair Eſtate, been brought to a morſel of Bread,

not

not by Caſualty, but by Crimes, ſuch as God might have left you to, as by that *fire* which, *Job* ſaith, *will conſume to deſtruction, and root out all a mans increaſe*, *Job* 31. 12. Now conſider, how much better your condition is than theirs. Are you as thoſe that have nothing, think of the Apoſtles words, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As having nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things.* If, either you are true Believers, or ſhall hereafter be ſuch, thoſe words of the ſame Apoſtle will be verified in you, 1 *Cor.* 3.21. *All things are yours, ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods.*

MEDITATION XXIV.

Upon thoſe that have loſt but half their Eſtates by this Fire, or ſome ſuch proportion.

WHat a mercy is it, that you have loſt but half, when ſo many others have loſt all? How much better is half a Loaf, as our Proverb ſpeaks, than no Bread? As *David* ſaid to *Mephiboſheth*, *Thou and Zibah divide*; ſo hath God decided the caſe, betwixt the fire and you. You are, at moſt, but like *David*'s Servants, the one half of whoſe Beards were ſhaven by *Hanan*, and their Garments cut in the middle. How much better is it, to have one Arm, than none; to have but one Eye, than to be ſtark blind? The man that was wounded, and left but half dead, recovered again, by the help and favour of the good Samaritan; and ſo may you. Poſſibly, that half or part which is left you, is more than many mens All: Your Gleanings better than the Vintage of many others. The Ancients ran much upon ſuch a ſaying as this, *Dimidium plus toto*, that *half was better then the whole*, meaning

meaning, the former with quietneſs and contentment, was much better then the latter without it. God can give you twice ſo much contentment with half ſo much Eſtate. If you ſay, and ſay truly, that you had ſcarce enough before, and now have but half ſo much as you had then; there are that have more by half then they needed, and how knoweſt thou but God may incline them to conſider thee who haſt ſcarce half enough?

But, Oh! the miſerable world in which many whoſe cup overflows will let others have nothing of theirs, if they have but ſomething of their own, though that ſomething be next to nothing. If men that have ten children have but enough to maintain one, are they no objects of pity and charity? If a man have doublet and breeches ſuch as may ſerve his turn, but neither hat to his head, nor ſhoos to his feet, will you not commiſerate him? Did the good *Samaritane* overlook the man he met becauſe he was but half dead? did he ſtay till he were ready to give up the ghoſt before he would do any thing for him? This is the manner of but too many men: but the comfort is, your heavenly Father he knows whereof you ſtand in need. Whether the moiety of what thou ſometimes hadſt be, or be not enough for thy occaſions, Bleſs God for it. That will be the way to have it multiplied as thoſe loaves were with which Chriſt fed five thouſand to the full. Try, what double induſtry, double frugality will do towards eaking out that allowance that ſeems to fall ſhort; and above all concluſions, try, if doubling thy faith and confidence in God will not double thy maintenance if need require. Learn to think, that God did not grudge thee the whole, but hath therefore retrencht

retrencht thee, as thou art retrencht, becauſe he knew, that but half was better for thee.

MEDITATION XXV.

Upon thoſe that loſt nothing by the Fire.

HOw well came you off? not ſo much as a hair of your head ſindged, not ſo much as the ſmell of fire about you. I cannot call you brands ſnatcht out of the fire, for you were better than ſo; brands are partly burnt, ſo were not you. Fall down and adore that diſtinguiſhing-mercy, which hath ſo preſerved you, and made a hedge about you. Alas! if all had been great loſers, how ſhould one have been able to help another, whereas now ſome are able to ſuccor others, if they be but as willing. God is trying you what good Stewards you will be of thoſe Talents, which he hath continued to you full and whole, whileſt others are either totally deprived of theirs, or at leaſtwiſe much diminiſhed. He expects you ſhould make yourſelves poorer (for the preſent) by your Charity, though he hath not made you ſo by the Fire; and woe be to you, if you do it not. He could have forced all your Eſtates from you, as he did from others; but, he thought fit to prove you, as to what you would part with freely. He would ſee what influence that Text hath upon you, *He that hath this worlds goods, and ſeeth his brother in want, and ſhuts up his bowels of compaſſion, How dwelleth the love of God in him?*

Think not, that all that is left you, is left you for yourſelves; for it is no ſuch matter: It is, that you ſhould diſperſe and give to the poor, that your

righteouſneſs may remain. You are but Feoffees in truſt for others, as to ſome good proportion of what is continued with you. I expect, God will caſt fire upon your houſes next, if you caſt not your bread upon the waters: Charity may ſecure what you enjoy, and the want of it may hazard all. It might have been your lot to have ſtood in need of receiving; and, now you are left able to give (which is a more bleſſed thing) will you not do it? All that was ſaved from the fire was given you again, and will you not lend God a part, who hath given you the whole? and what is that lending to God, but giving to the Poor? God hath been tender of your Tabernacles, and will not you be kind to his living Temples? They that were ſent to fetch the Aſs that Chriſt was to ride upon, were bid to ſay, *The Lord had need of him.* Now, if ever, hath Chriſt need to borrow of thoſe that are able, as in reference to his poor members; and woe to them that can, and will not lend to their Lord and Saviour. He could ſupply them otherwiſe, without being beholden to you; but it is your love he values more than your liberality, and the latter but as an Expreſſion of the former. It is not ſo much *A gift which he deſireth, as fruit that may abound to your own account*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Phil.* 4.17. You may pretend you are thankful for the great Deliverance vouchſafed you, but neither God, nor Men, will believe you are ſo, unleſs you be alſo Charitable to them that were not Delivered.

MED-

MEDITATION XXVI.

Upon thoſe that were Gainers by the late Fire.

WE ſay, It is an evil wind, that blows no body any good. Some were honeſt gainers, (and much good may it do them); others diſhoneſt. Some could not let their Tenements before the fire, who have ſince, let them for moderate Rents; ſuch are honeſt gainers: Others have let their houſes at moſt exceſſive Rates; and ſuch have loaded themſelves with diſhoneſt gain. But be their gains one way or another, I think no man ought, for the preſent, to pocket the money which he hath clearly gotten by the fire, (if it be ſo they can ſpare it). *David* would not drink of the waters of *Bethlehem* which were brought to him, becauſe, as he ſaid, They were the price of Blood, meaning, his Souldiers had ventured their lives for it: What men have gotten by this fire, is little leſſe than the price of Blood, conſidering how many were impoveriſhed that a few might be inriched, or rather, that the inriching of but a very few, is by the undoing of many thouſands.

Men may look upon their gains by this fire, as *Deodates*: Let as many as are able be their own Almoners, and give it back to God. Is it not a Sabbatical year (in a doleful ſenſe) for that the poor City now injoyeth it's Sabbath? and in a Sabbatical year that did bear a better interpretation, the rich were not ſuffered to reap, but were to leave the Crop to the poor, as appeareth, by comparing, *Exod.* 23. 11. with *Levit.* 25. 5. If men who have only ſaved what they had before, ought

to contribute to them that have loſt: how much more ought they, who have received an Addition by this very means? To Build upon the Ruines of others, is one of the worſt Foundations that can be. Let it never be ſaid, The fire hath made you rich, whilſt ſuch multitudes continue poor, miſerably poor, whom meerly the fire hath made ſo. We uſe to ſay, Men have gotten thoſe things out of the fire, which they came hardly by. But what men got by, or out of, the late fire, was eaſily come by; well may it go leightly, for it leightly came, yet neither doth that go leightly, which goes to the uſe of Charity. When I conſider, how this fire which hath ruined many, hath raiſed ſome, it brings to mind what is ſaid, *Luke* 1. 52. *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath ſent empty away.* How ſtrangely, and by ſeeming contraries, doth the providence of God bring things to paſs, that when a diſmall fire hapned, ſome men ſhould be made by it! So a Priſon made way for *Joſeph*'s preferment; and *Oneſimus* his running away from his Maſter, for his returning to God and to himſelf, and a better Servant to his Maſter than ever. An Eſtate caſt upon men by the deſolating Fire, ſounds like ſuch a Riddle as that of *Sampſon*, *Out of the eater came meat, and out the ſtrong came ſweetneſs*: Is it not as a Honey-comb found in the Carcaſe of a Lion? You whom God by this fire hath unexpectedly enabled more than ever, to eat the Fat and drink the Sweet (you know what I allude to) ſee that you ſend portions to them for whom nothing is provided.

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MEDITATION XXVII.

Upon the Inducements unto re-building of London, *and ſome wayes of promoting it.*

THat *London* ſhould be re-built, is ſo much the concern of *England*, both in point of Honour and of Trade, as hardly any thing can be more. Whilſt that lieth in the duſt, our Glory lieth with it. Our Enemies rejoice to ſee it where it is: but ſhould we let it lie there long, Oh! how would they ſcorn us for it, and conclude, it were becauſe we had not wherewithall to build it up again. They know, as well as we, that there is no part of *England* ſituate ſo commodiouſly for Trade as *London* is; which name is ſaid to ſignifie in the Language of the Britains (it's firſt Inhabitants) *Shipton*, or a Town of Ships; in regard, that the famous River which runs by the ſide of it, is able to entertain the greateſt Ships that can ride upon the Sea, which thing hath made it ſo famous a Mart; thoſe Ships bringing in all the rich commodities the world can afford. Hence *London* for ſo many Ages paſt, hath held it's Primacy over all other parts of *England*, and none hath been thought fit to ſucceed it in that dignity, though the ſhifting of Trade from one City to another, and an alternate Superlativeneſs hath been frequent in other parts of the world, where one place hath been as commodious as another. But *London* never had rival that did, or could pretend it's ſelf as fit to make the great Emporium and Metropolis of *England* as was it's ſelf. The River of *Thames* made it ſo, at firſt; and that, under God, will and muſt make it ſo

again. It periſhed by fire, and muſt be ſaved by water; for, that, if any thing, will make it once again what it was before, as *Job* ſaith of a Tree, onely the Root whereof is left in the ground, that thorough the ſcent of water, it will ſprout again. How venerable is *London*, were it but for its Antiquity, of which *Ammianus Marcellinus* reports, that it was called an ancient City in his time, which was above twelve hundreds years ago; and *Cornelius Tacitus* ſeems to do the like, three hundred years before him, telling us, that, for multitudes of Merchants and Commerce, *London* was very renowned, fifteen hundred years ago: nor can we ſuppoſe it to have preſently arrived at that perfection. Who would not aſſiſt the building of another City in that place, hoping it may continue as many Ages as the other did, and longer too, if God be pleaſed to prevent the like diſaſter. I confeſs, I love not to hear men boaſt at ſuch a time as this what they will do, or what ſhall be done, as to the building of *London* more glorious than ever. The Inhabitants of *Samaria* are blamed for ſaying, *The Bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewen Stones; the Sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into Cedars.* We are but putting on our harneſs, as to re-building; let us not boaſt, as if we were putting of it off: This is not a time in which to ſay much, though it becomes us to do all we can. If we may ſee but ſuch another City it will be a great mercy, but one more glorious than that we may ſcarce expect till we ſee it. Alas! how many difficulties is that work clogg'd with? How ſcarce and dear are all materials? How poor are many that deſire to build? How hard, and almoſt impoſſible will it be, to ſatisfie the Intereſt of all proprietors?

proprietors? Amongſt all the Models that are preſented for that purpoſe, How hard will it be to know how to pitch upon that which may be moſt convenient? If we build every where, as before, it will be incommodious for Paſſage, dangerous for Fire; if by a new Platform, it is hard not to be injurious to multitudes of People, whoſe Houſes ſtood inconveniently, as to the Publick: Lord, Give our Senators double and treble wiſdom, that they may be ſatisfactory-Repairers of ſo great breaches.

But, How ſhall Moneys be Levied for the rebuilding of *London*, where the Eſtates of perſons concerned do fall ſhort? Two Expedients for that I have propounded already; One was, by the Mercy and Charity of thoſe perſons who have loſt little or nothing by the fire; and, who have ſomething they could well ſpare: The other is, By the Juſtice and due Repentance of all thoſe perſons, Carters, Landlords, and others, who have raiſed uncoſcionable gains to themſelves, by means of the late Fire; whoſe duty it is, to reſtore, not only the principal of what they have unlawfully gotten by the fire, but ſome certain over-plus, as was provided under the Law, in caſes of *Reſtitution*: When that is done, I wiſh there were a certain Pole-fine, or Mulct, ſet upon the head of every common ſin, not made capital; which additional-Pole, levied upon all perſons that are able, when once convicted of Drunkenneſs, Swearing, Couſenage, Curſing, yea Lying its ſelf, might be for, and towards the re-building of *London*: I ſpeak of an Additional pecuniary Puniſhment for thoſe Crimes, both for that the former and preſent Mulcts have not been ſufficient to reſtrain Men; as alſo, for that great ſumms are ſtill in arrear to

Juſtice; becauſe thoſe kind of Penalties have been but ſeldom inflicted, poſſibly not one time in a hundred that they ought to have been. To do this, were not to build *London* upon the ſins of the People, (as ſome will object;) but upon the puniſhment of Sin, and due execution of Juſtice, which would be a glorious foundation. If but one ſhilling extraordinary were levied upon men *toties quoties*; that is, ſo often as they are, or might be, convicted for any of the fore-mentioned ſins: How noble a City might thoſe Fines build, if men ſhould continue ſo bad as now they are? Whilſt ſome particular perſons, (and thoſe able enough to pay for it) ſtick not to ſwear hundreds of Oaths in one day, beſides all the Execrations and Lies they become guilty of in one day. But, if men had rather reform themſelves, than by their Crimes help to rebuild the City, the former ſhall be as welcom as the latter; and, the latter may, in one ſenſe, be promoted by the former. But, if that way of raiſing Money be ſo happily prevented, poſſibly ſo ſoon as God ſhall pleaſe to turn our *Swords into Plow-ſhares, and* our *Spears into Pruning-hooks*: The Wiſdom of our Governors may think fit to make ſome coercive-levy, for once, towards the relieving of friends, as they have formerly done; for, and towards the humbling of Forraign-Enemies: and, as the Ruin of *London* is a National-Calamity, ſo, Who knows whether our Rulers may not pleaſe to make the re-building of it ſomewhat of a National-Charge? as it would certainly be an honour, and an advantage to the whole Nation: But, remembring what is ſaid, *Pſ.* 127. 1. *Except the Lord build the houſe*, (and ſo the City,) *they labour in vain that build it*; I cannot but further conſider

what

what words we ſhould take unto our ſelves, where-with to plead with God, that *London*, (if it ſo ſeem good to him,) may be built again: And, May we not plead thus? O Lord, How many hundred Families are there, whoſe livelihoods ſeem to depend upon the re-building of that City? What hard ſhift do they make in the mean-time, dwelling many of them like the *Iſraelites*, in Tents or Bothes? Were not many of theſe good and merciful men? And, Haſt thou not ſaid, *That with the Merciful thou wilt ſhow thy ſelf Merciful*? How many are there, whoſe bowels yearn, and whoſe hearts bleed over the deſolations of *London*? Shall Men pity them, and will not God much more, who is of infinite compaſſions? What ſtrong affections have theſe poor hearts for the place where that City ſometimes ſtood? How do they cleave, as it were, to the Ruins of it? How loth are they to remove at any diſtance from it, as if they could ſettle to no buſineſs any where elſe, no more than *Iriſh*-Kine, which, as they ſay, cannot give down their Milk, unleſs their Calves, or ſomething in their likeneſs ſtand by their ſides: How do their Enemies, yea, and thine alſo, inſult and triumph, whilſt poor *London* lieth in aſhes; ſaying, *Aha, Aha*; ſo would we have it? Shall *London* be alwayes a Ruinous Heap, whilſt *Rome*, and *Paris*, continue flouriſhing Cities? Haſt thou not a greater *Controverſie* with them than with it? Doſt thou ſuffer them to ſtand? (not that we beg the deſtruction of any place,) Wilt not thou permit *London* to riſe again? Shall *England* never be like its ſelf again? or, How can it be ſo, if *London* be no more? Was ever the Reſtauration of a City more prayed for, and ſhall all thoſe Prayers fall to the ground? Lord,

What

What joy will there be, when the re-building of *London* ſhall be once finiſhed? How will the top-Stone be laid with Acclamations of Grace, Grace, Pſal. 71. 20. *Thou, who haſt ſhowed that place and People great and ſore troubles, vouchſafe to quicken them again, and bring them up again from the depths of the Earth: Increaſe their greatneſs, and comfort them on every ſide.*

MEDITATION XXVIII.

Upon the Wines and Oils that ſwam in the Streets, and did augment the Flames.

I Have heard, that upon ſome great Solemnities, the Conduits have been made to run with Claret: But, ſo much precious Wine and Oyl, as ran down the Kennels upon this ſad occaſion, was never known to do ſo before: Then was *London* a burning Lamp, flaming with its own Oyl; But, worſe than the waſting of thoſe Wines and Oyls themſelves was their unhappy mixing with that water; which ſome, not well conſidering, made uſe of, to throw upon the flames; and, thereby in ſtead of extinguiſhing, did increaſe them.

Oh the hurtfulneſs even of coſtly Mixtures in ſome caſes, Water alone had done well; but, Wine and Oyl added to it did a world of miſchief: So in *Baptiſm*, Water alone doth as well as can be, (ſuiting the Inſtitution;) but, to add Cream, and Spittle, is both ſinful, ſlovenly, and ridiculous: But, O naſty beaſts! Why do you uſe Spittle above all the reſt? VVould you imitate that Miracle whereby the *eyes of the blind-man were opened with Spittle* for one thing? Why then do you not uſe Clay too? But, you are better at making *Seers*

blind,

blind, than *blind-Folks ſee*: Or, is it from the great commendation which you have heard of Faſting-Spittle, (in many other caſes,) that you uſe Spittle in this? Away with your unwarranted-mixtures, (beaſtly ones eſpecially,) you make me digreſs from a ſerious Subject, to anſwer Fools according to their folly; But, I'le return again.

Oh, How did all things at that time conſpire to make poor *London* miſerable? Not only did the Streets and Kennels drink freely of their beſt Wines and Oyls, but alſo made the Fire to pledge them, till it became outragious, like a man-in-drink. Drunkards may read their ſin in their puniſhment: God hath inflamed their City with Wine, wherewith they had wont to inflame themſelves: God threatned the *Jews*, Hoſ. 2. *That he would take from them his Wine, and his Oyl, which they had prepared for Baal*; and, Why not yours, which you had prepared for *Bacchus*? What an Argument is it of your unworthineſs, that God ſhould give theſe good creatures to the Flames, rather than to your Selves?

MEDITATION XXIX.

Upon the water running down hill ſo faſt that they could not ſtop it for their uſe.

DId not the water make more haſte than good ſpeed; when it ran down-hill with ſuch a force that they could hardly make any dams to ſave it? *Ariſtotle's* deſcription of Water, is but ſlight who deſcribes it by this, that it can hardly be contained within it's own bounds, *vix continetur*

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in ſuis terminis, facile in alienis, but this ſad occaſion may make us think of it; for it was found very difficult to ſtop it in it's career: yet I think the main reaſon was it's running down ſo great and ſteep precipices, rather then it's natural extravagancy, and aptneſs to tranſgreſs it's bounds. But let the cauſe be what it will, that which I would obſerve is, that by overdoing, it undid; it came not at all or not conſiderably to their help and aid becauſe it came too faſt. So, blood and ſpirits flowing too faſt to any part of the body that is miſ-affected (as to the ſide in a pleuriſie) give no relief but do hurt. How good were it, if men knew when and where to ſtop? He was a wiſe man (though he called himſelf a ſimple Cobler) who adviſed that men would unload on this ſide *Munſter*, and take heed of overthrowing *Charles* his Wain: Nor was he a fool that obſerved, that ſome men make ſo much haſte out of *Babylon* that they run beyond *Jeruſalem*. There is no good Muſick to be made, unleſs men will keep their due Stops.

MEDITATION XXX.

Upon mens being unwilling there ſhould be no fire, though fire hath done ſo much hurt.

AFter all the miſchief that fire hath done in the world, firſt & laſt, none would be content there ſhould be no ſuch thing as fire. Though ſometimes we are the worſe for it, yet it would be worſe for us to be always without it. The uſe of things that are greatly uſeful ought not to be taken away, becauſe they have been abuſed, or may be ſo. For by that reaſon the Scripture might be with-

withheld from the common people, or denied them in their mother-tongue, becauſe ſome paſſages in the Epiſtles of *Paul*, have been wreſted by ignorant people to their own deſtruction. And by the ſame reaſon there ſhould be no Univerſities, becauſe ſome, with the learning they have there received, have contended not for, but againſt the truth: yea, no Preaching, becauſe ſome have done more hurt then good in their Pulpits; Yea, upon that account, men might declame againſt Chriſt himſelf; For that Chriſt hath been, and will be to ſome a ſtumbling-ſtone, and a Rock of offence, and ſaith of himſelf, that, in one ſenſe *He came not to ſend peace upon the earth, but a ſword.*

They that would baniſh all good things out of the world have ever argued from this very Topick that ſuch and ſuch things have at one time or other done hurt, and may do ſo again; ſo hath fire when they reſolve to abandon it, and never uſe it more: then, and not till then, ſhall I believe they are true to their principles. When the uſe of things is greater than the abuſe, but eſpecially when, and where the abuſe of good things may be effectually provided againſt, to ſuppreſs the uſe of them, is a thing that can never be anſwered.

MEDITATION XXXI.

Upon the uſefulneſs of fire in it's proper place, and the danger of it elſewhere.

FIre on a ſafe Hearth, or in a good Furnace, or Oven, how uſeful is it? What almoſt can be done

done without it? Yet what more pernicious than the ſame fire, if it chance to burn where it ſhould not. Some have expreſſed it thus, that *Fire is a good Servant but a bad Maſter*. *Solomon* ſaith, *Light is good, and it is pleaſant to behold the Sun*. The ſame is true of Fire, eſpecially in the Winter time which we uſe to commend by the name of a fine *Sunny-bank*. But if it happen to get into a reek of hay, or into a ſtack, or field of Corn, or into the Timber of a houſe: Oh! What work doth it oft-times make? Men have their proper places aſſigned them by God, as well as Fire. In caſe they be of nimble active and fiery Spirits, let them but keep within their bounds, and they will do no hurt. Yea, the livelineſs of their ſpirits may inable them to do the more good. But if ſervants once come to ride on Horſe-back, and make their Maſters go on foot; if inferiours will become the head, and make their Superiours the tail; if young *Phaetons* will get into the Chariot of the Sun, nothing but miſchief and confuſion can inſue. How good is the Apoſtle's advice *Every man wherein he is called, therein let him abide with God*.

MEDITATION XXXII.

Upon the Blowing up of Houſes.

METhinks that ſaying concerning *Babylon* is very diſmall: *Happy is he that ſhall take thy children and daſh their brains againſt the ſtones*. Next to the doleſulneſs of that time, ſeems to be the miſery of that ſad ſeaſon in which men roſe up & called them bleſſed, who would do that good office, as

to

to blow up their houſes, leſt they and many more ſhould periſh together. Did we ever think that a time would come, when men would beg, and intreat that not only their neighbours houſes might be blown up, but their own alſo, and count themſelves beholden to them that would do it? God's ways in Judgements, as well as Mercies, are above ours, as far as the heavens are above the earth. I cannot but think, what a name that way of Blowing-up-houſes hath gotten; how much it is applauded and how much men lament that it was either not conſidered or not permitted ſooner. We are thankful to men that do us good, though by harſheſt remedies, and why ſhould we not be ſo to God, when he is pleaſed to teach us obedience to himſelf, though it be by briars and thorns (as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth*); when he prevents or abates our pride, though it be by ſending a meſſenger of Sathan to buffet us. But how quickly was a great and ſtately Houſe, firſt blown up, and then laid flat upon the ground? It was but as it were a flaſh of lightning, then a clap of thunder, then one jumpt upwards (as if it had been that it might take the greater Fall); then a great ſmoak, and preſently all was in the duſt. Scarce could a ſtrong hand have ſooner ſhuck in pieces the rotten branches of an old worm-eaten tree; yea, ſcarcely could it have made the over-ripe fruit of a tender plant (as it might be the Vine) to fall ſooner to the ground then many goodly Fabricks by the irreſiſtible force of Gun-powder were ſhaken to pieces, and preſently laid in the duſt.

How eaſie is the diſſolution of any earthly thing? The way of making things is as it were up-hill; men puff and blow at it, and are out of breath,

breath, and must take time. But destruction is a precipice. Things no sooner begin to tumble from the top, but they are presently at the bottom of that hill. Gun-powder it's self is the most easily ruined, and destroyed of any thing; Thousands of Barrels if they lie together may be blown up by means of one spark, and yet no earthly creature so able to destroy as is Gun-powder; so that it should seem nothing, is more Passive, and yet nothing more active then that. So have I observed amongst men that none are so apt to ruine others as those that are most apt to ruine or be ruined themselves. As destructive a thing as Gun-powder is, did we not owe the preservation of what was preserved to that under God, and to them that had the courage to use it, more then to any thing else. Sometimes there is no way to save the most but by destroying a part; so that high Priest prophesied, that it was of necessity that one should die for the people; though other-whiles if you destroy any, you can save none, as *Paul* told them that were with him, Except these abide in the ship you cannot be saved. Men skilful to destroy, if they knew when to use their faculty, and when to forbear it, might be very serviceable; forasmuch, as destruction in part, is sometimes the only way to deliverance; as there is no way to save the life of a man that hath a Gangered-Limb, unless you cut it off.

But, Why was this way of blowing up Houses no sooner thought of, (being so effectual as it is)? nothing could be more obvious; but God is wont to blind those whom he intends to ruine. *Quos Jupiter perdere vult, dementat*: We read, that *The men of might have not found their hands*, Psal. 76. 5. and, if not their hands, what could they find? But,

Was

Was this way timely thought of? Was it motioned, and would it not be hearkned to? That is more than I know: But, if it were ſo, the cauſe was either vain Commiſeration; thinking, What pity it was, to Blow up here and there a Houſe; not conſidering, How much better it was to do ſo, than to let the whole City periſh: Better one *Jonas* be thrown over-board, than the whole Ship be caſt away. Thus, ſome Phyſicians deſtroy their Patients, by not admitting of more generous, though more venturous Medicines; when the Diſeaſe is ſuch, as will not be played, or dallied with. Or, Timerouſneſs might be the cauſe; They might fear to be called in queſtion for giving way to the Blowing up of Houſes: But, Magiſtrates ſhould overlook private-Concerns, when they are ſatisfied what will be for publick-Good. Some perhaps do judg, it proceeded from *Covetouſneſs, that root of all evil*: But, Who is ſo covetous, as to let a Ship and all its Fraught be loſt, rather than throw a part of its Lading into the Sea, whereby to ſecure the reſt? More attribute it to careleſsneſs, ſecurity, and preſumption; as thinking thoſe flames much more eaſily extinguiſhable than indeed they were; and that they might *draw waters enough out of their own Ciſterns* (to allude to *Prov.* 1. 15.) wherewith to put it out; which is a modeſter phraſe then is ſaid to have been uſed in the caſe: It is a very weak Cordial, that ſome, it may be, do comfort themſelves withal, *viz.* That, if ever *London* be firſt Built, and then Fir'd again, in any part of it, they will not fail to Blow up Houſes in good time: Now the Steed is ſtoln, be ſure to ſhut the Stable-door. But, I ſhall conclude this *Meditation* with my beſt wiſhes; That, if the will of God be ſo, we may

never hear more the *ſound of the Trumpet, and the Alarm of War*; nor yet (which is to many more dreadful than the former) the doleful noiſe of Blowing up of Houſes.

MEDITATION XXXI.

Upon preventing the beginning of Evils.

HOw good is it to take things in time, to meet a Diſeaſe, as the *Poet* phraſeth it; *Venienti occurrere morbo*: How many complain, at firſt, of nothing but a Cold; that cold turns to a Feaver; that feaver from Benigne to Malignant; and, that Malignity ends in Death. Sometimes the ſcratch of a Pin, not ſeaſonably lookt after, Feſters and Gangrenes, and doth coſt men their Lives. Moſt Men think, that, if ſo effectual means, as were uſed at laſt, had been known at firſt, at leaſt-wiſe conſidered; or rather, if not only known and conſidered of, but alſo reſolved upon, and proſecuted; that Fire, which, at laſt, carried all before it, had been ſtifled, as it were, in its Cradle. But alaſs! for poor Man-kind, it is generally one aggravation of their miſeries, that ſome way was made for their eſcape, and they were not ſenſible of it till it was too late: Not incountring a danger at the firſt, ordinarily ſprings from deſpiſing of it; which to do, is a very evil and an impolitick thing: For uſually, the greateſt things have but ſmall beginnings; and that Cloud, which at firſt is no bigger than a *hands breadth*, may ſpread, till it cover all the face of heaven. *How great a flame doth a little fire kindle*, as the *Holy-Ghoſt* ſpeaks by St. *James*. It is ill preſuming, that things will conſtantly ſucceed ſo well

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as generally they do; Fires have ordinarily been quenched without blowing up of Houſes, but it would not be ſo in this caſe.

Therefore it is good to ſuſpect, and provide againſt the worſt, as careful Women do for a Quinſey, and give a remedy againſt it, when their Children have but a ſore-throat; though many ſore-throats never end in a Quinſey. *Abundans cautela non nocet*: If we prepare for the worſt, and it prove otherwiſe, the beſt will help it ſelf. I ſhall live in hope, that after ſo great a Warning given, none will hereafter be *Epimetheus*, or offer to play an after-Game; but will apply themſelves to the remedying of Evils at their firſt coming. *Solomon* ſpeaking concerning Anger, ſaith, *The beginning of ſtrife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off ſtrife before it be medled withal*, Prov. 17.14. When Waters have begun to make a breach in thoſe Banks which ſhould have kept them in, there is like to be ſuch an inundation as will bear down all before it; which Compariſon is applicable to many more evils beſides ſtrife and contention. Remedies too late applied, (like letting of blood in a Feaver, when the time for it is paſt,) do more hurt than good. For Citizens, to forbear carrying out their Goods, that they might attend upon quenching the Fire, when it was paſt quenching, by any thing that they could do, (how well ſoever intended,) was but to ſtay, and look on, whilſt their Goods burnt; and, to increaſe the flames, as well as their own grief and loſſe by the burning of them. I ſay again, Let men hence learn to take things in time; Remember *Eſau*, of whom we read, *Heb.* 12.17. How that afterward, when he *would have inherited the bleſsing, he was rejected, for he found no place of*

repentance, (viz. in his father, for having given it away from him,) *though he ſought it carefully with tears.* In the ſame words that *Chriſt* lamented *Jeruſalem*, give me leave to lament *London*, and ſay, *O that thou hadſt known, in this thy day, the things that had concerned thy Peace:* yea, let me add, Whenſoever another day of Grace, and for prevention of evil, ſhall come, (as indeed the preſent time, though in a more ſpiritual ſenſe, is ſuch a Day,) *May we then know the things that concern our peace, before they be hid from our eyes.*

MEDITATION XXXII.

Upon the City-Miniſters, whoſe Churches were ſaved from the Fire.

GIve a reaſon, if you can, Why your Churches were not burnt, as well as were the moſt of your Brethrens? Why was an Ark provided for you, (whoſe number was ſcarce twice eight,) when all the Miniſters of *London* beſides were (as ſuch) ſwept away by that Deluge of Fire, (if I may ſo call it,) which did then overflow? Were you the only *Noahs* that were in the Old World? VVere there no Preachers of Righteouſneſs but your ſelves? or, Did you help to build that Ark, which ſaved you, as *Noah* did? I dare engage for you, You have more humility and modeſty than to think any ſuch thing: You are convinced, God made a difference where he found none. You hate in this caſe, to ſay, *Ego me ipſum diſcrevi.* You know, no account is to be given of it; But *that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy:* God who acteth all things according to the Counſel

Counſel of His own Will, hath reaſons for every thing he doth, but we are not worthy to know them. To be ſure, thoſe I did mention were none of them.

What a diſtinguiſhing mercy is it, that you have both ſheep and folds, when other Shepherds have neither folds nor ſheep; their folds are burnt, their ſheep are ſcatter'd. Me-thinks it is time, All ſhops of meat are ſhut up, only here, and there one, that hath gotten a licenſe, and what a thing is it, that one of thoſe licenſes ſhould fall to your ſhare, there being ſo few of them as are? When there were Ninty ſeven Churches ſtanding in *London*, had you heard a ſuſpenſion was coming forth (for what reaſon you could not tell) againſt all but twelve or ſixteen of thoſe Ninty ſeven Miniſters, could you have imagined that each of you ſhould have been one of that priviledged number, or as the Diſciples of Chriſt askt him one by one when he told them one ſhould betray him *Maſter is it I*? So would not you have askt, Am not I, one of thoſe that are to be ſuſpended, and in caſe it had proved otherwiſe how thankful would you have been? Such is your caſe now. Others have loſt, and you have gained; Others have no Congregations, and yours are greater then ever (and look like gathered Churches made up of people collected out of ſeveral parts and Pariſhes) which now come to hear you. You have received ſingular favour; doth not God expect you ſhould do ſome ſingular thing? As Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples, What ſingular thing do you? Will you not think yours ſelves bound to ſhine with double and treble ſo much light as formerly (if you can poſſibly) now that there are ſo few publick Lights

left to shine in this part of the firmament. Pray, that the spirit of *Elias* may be doubled upon you now that so many *Elias*'s (as you your selves accounted them) are taken away by that fiery Chariot I have been speaking of. If you see such multitudes in your respective Churches as you never saw there before, have compassion on them as Christ had, and labour to send them away well fed, and satisfied. Your lips are now to preserve knowledge for many more than they had wont to do; The fire hath given you a kind of Monopoly for preaching in these parts, and therefore you must needs have the more Auditors; Forfeit not your Patent. I was a stranger to several of you, but others of you I knew, whom I believe to be honest and ingenuous men, partly for whose sake I am glad that those Candlesticks are still in being, which did and do contain so serviceable Lights. As *Noah* being saved from the deluge, did greatly help to increase the world; so, may you adde daily to the Church *such as shall be saved*; and then the worst I wish you, is, that a blessing from heaven may attend your labours.

MEDITATION XXXIII.

Upon those Ministers whose Churches were burnt.

THere was cause to fear some years since that Churches might be demolished, not generally by fire (for of that there was no mistrust), but by those whom the Scripture compares to water, *viz.* A rude multitude, I mean of deluded and sick-brain people, who pretended that all Ministers, and their legal Maintenance were Anti-

christi-

chriſtian, Churches places of Spiritual whoredom; and could as willingly have pulled them down, as if they had been ſo many Brothel-houſes. Was it any thing but a pretence? could they think as they ſpake? I ſhould hardly believe men could be ſo miſtaken, but that Chriſt foretold ſome would think they ſhould do God good ſervice, even in killing his Prophets: and *Paul* tells us, that when time was he verily thought he ought to do many things againſt Jeſus of *Nazareth*. They that thought it their duty to oppoſe and vilifie the places called Churches, would probably have taken it for as great an honour to have demoliſhed them themſelves, as others might to have burnt them; but he that ſits in heaven would not gratifie their ambition, but put that work into the hand of the fire to do, which could no ways glory or triumph in it when it was done. But that which I am now to diſcourſe of, is not, by whom but upon whom this Calamity came, *viz.* Concerning the Miniſters whoſe Churches were burnt. Now far be it from me and others to think that they were greater ſinners then other Miniſters whoſe Churches ſtand to this day. I cannot forget what Chriſt ſaith, *Luk.* 13. 4. *Suppoſe ye that thoſe upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and ſlew them, were ſinners above all men that dwelt at Jeruſalem; I tell you nay, but except you repent y u ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Had theſe Miniſters made Cock-pits of their Pulpits (as ſome elſewhere have done); had they, like *thoſe toes of the clov.n foot, which conſiſted partly of Iron, and partly of clay,* (to allude to *Dan.* 2. 4.) come thither to trample upon Magiſtracy and Miniſtery, in ſuch railing Language as ſome that I have heard; had they thence, *like mad men, caſt firebrands, arrows and*

death, Prov. 26. 18. truly, for that time, their Churches might have been ſpared; but ſuch we e the labours of ſeveral of them, as will certainly be miſſed.

Neither can I chuſe, but reflect how dearly ſome of them (as is probable) will miſs their Livings, ſuch I mean as have Wives and Children, and little or nothing to live upon, but what came in that way; Few men make a worſe ſhift in the world than Schollars, eſpecially Miniſters when put out of their courſe; They that have lived as it were out of the world, can worſt of all skill how to live in it. Swords may be beaten into Ploughſhares, ſo cannot Books; Moreover the liberalneſs, and ingenuouſneſs of the Education of Schollars makes them greater objects of pity than many others are, when poverty overtakes them. It is pity, that they who deſire to live, that they may ſtudy, ſhould be put upon ſtudying little elſe, but how to live. One half years time, without the help of a Living, may ſo pinch ſome honeſt Miniſters, who have great Families, as that they can ſcarcely bear it. They may have hope, the graſs will grow again, but they fear, leſt mean time the Steed ſhould ſtarve. What ſhall be done for thoſe Miniſters whom only the fire hath ſequeſtred? How ſhall they be provided for? There is a ſaying of Chriſt in *Luk.* 3, 11. which, Analogically applied and practiſed, might go a great way, and it is this, *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, & he that hath meat let him do likewiſe.*

But that which I have more hope of, is, that the Nobility and Gentry of *England*, who either have or ſhortly may have good Livings to diſpoſe of, will lay to heart, how many worthy *Labourers ſtand*

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idle in the Market-place ſince the Fire, becauſe there is none to ſet them on work; and will uſe their beſt indeavours that they may be *ſent forth into Gods Vineyard.* What God ſaith of *Joſhuah* the *High-Prieſt*, Zach. 3. 2. *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the Fire?* is, me-thinks applicable to thoſe Miniſters whoſe Churches were burnt, and themſelves ſpared; (for what is a Brand, but a ſtick partly burnt, and partly unburnt); Now, as God was pleaſed to adde concerning *Joſhua*, *Take away the filthy garments from him, and I will clothe him with change of raiments.* Some ſuch thing in a Moral ſenſe, ſhould the ſeveral Patrons in *England*, reſolve to do for thoſe able Miniſters, whoſe Churches were conſumed, *viz.* To inveſt them with Livings worthy of them, and ſuffer them no longer, as it were, *to wear ſackcloth, and to lie in aſhes.* The Statutes of ſome Colledges have wiſely provided, that when there is any competition for places of preferment, *cæteris paribus*, they that have moſt need of it, ſhould be firſt choſen, they that have leaſt wealth ſhould carry it, if they have as much worth. May Patrons go by the ſame Rule, *viz.* To prefer the pooreſt firſt, which to do is as I may call it Simony inverſed, or the juſt oppoſite to baſe Simony: for where Simony takes place, they that have moſt (and are moſt free to part with it) do always carry it; but where Charity bears ſway, the lot falls upon thoſe that have leaſt. I ſee how you may exerciſe a threefold Charity in one, *viz.* Charity to unimployed and impoveriſhed Miniſters, Charity to the places where and people amongſt whom you live, (For ſome Miniſters do not more want good places, then many places do want good Miniſters); Yea, & Charity to your

your ſelves and families, to whom honeſt and able Miniſters would be no ſmall bleſſings: Let me therefore beg for ſuch Miniſters, as the *Italians* uſe to beg for themſelves, by ſaying to our Honourable Nobility, and Gentry, as they to thoſe of whom they ask, *Pray remember to be good to your ſelves.*

MEDITATION XXXIV.

Upon the killing of ſeveral People by the falling of ſome part of ruinous Churches.

MEn were never afraid, till of late, to paſs by the out-ſides of Churches, though there were not a few that did not much care to come within them: Alas, that thoſe places, in which many Souls have formerly been ſaved, by the faithful Preaching of Gods VVord, ſhould now ſerve to no other end, but to deſtroy mens Bodies. Seeing the greateſt part of ſo many Churches were burnt, How happy had it been for divers perſons if *not one ſtone had been left upon another, which had not been thrown down*: Thoſe tall Ruins, thoſe high Trophies of the Fire, have coſt many lives already; and God only knows, how many more they may coſt firſt and laſt.

I was never the man that did, (as too many others,) wiſh the Churches down to the very ground, till ſince the Fire; and, now I wiſh it with all my heart, concerning as many of them as are burnt; for, VVhy ſhould they ſtand to ruin ſome, and to terrifie all that paſs by them, eſpecially in a VVindy-ſeaſon. I know not to whom it belongs to take care, that ruinated-Buildings ſhould be quite pulled

pulled down; but, ſure I am, they have had fair warning; and if they take it not, by the ſame reaſon, *That he who digged a pit, and covered it not, in caſe a beaſt fell into it, was to make ſatisfaction to the owner: and, that he, whoſe Oxe gored another mans Oxe to death, knowing that the Oxe had wont to puſh in time paſt, and the owner had not kept him in, was, by* Moſes *his Law, to pay Oxe for Oxe, and the dead was to be his own*, Exod. 21. 36. I ſay, by parity of reaſon, ought they, who know the danger of Fragments of Churches, and other Buildings, ſtanding as they do, to ſatisfie for the lives of thoſe Men and VVomen, who ſhall happen hereafter to be killed by the fall of thoſe places, which it was their duty to have taken down: Great pity it is that ſo much notice was not taken of the firſt perſon that periſhed by that means, as might have prevented the deſtruction of all the reſt; But, of that we ſpeak too late.

Had thoſe Churches been either perfectly ſtanding, or perfectly demoliſh'd, they could have done no hurt; but, being between both, they were in a capacity to do miſchief; though, as for matter of ſervice, they were in no capacity at all. I am deceived if it be not juſt ſo with almoſt, but not altogether-ruin'd Perſons, as with Places of that ſort; Though they can do, or receive little good themſelves, yet may they prove incomparably deſtructive to others, (eſpecially in ſuch high Winds as may blow;) and therefore prudence may ſuggeſt, that ſuch Perſons, as are not judged worthy to be perfectly ruin'd, and, as it were deſtroyed from off the face of the earth, had better be left ſtanding in ſome tolerable condition, than in ſuch a tottering and ruinous way, as, in caſe any violent tempeſt, or unexpected

unexpected Herricane should happen, might indanger the ruin of many, upon whom they may chance to fall.

I cannot dismiss this Subject till I have considered how securely those Persons, that were killed by the fall of ruinous-Buildings, may have been supposed to have passed by them, till perchance their utter-destruction gave them the first apprehensions of their dangers, or rather anticipated the apprehensions of it. Alas! How unexpected a guest oft-times is Death? How often doth it draw the latch and come in upon men unawares, when they dream of nothing less? How comes it like a *thief in the night*, when men are in a profound sleep of security? It is like, those People thought, that seeing so many persons had gon that way with safety the self-same-day; yea, it may be the self-same-hour; so might they, as well as the rest: But, I see, there is no Topick, from which men argue for security, (how probable soever,) but fails them now and then; neither is there any safety in probable immunity, from sudden death, but only in due preparation for it. As for those, who have often passed to and fro the Ruins, and by the sides of tottering-Walls, but never received any hurt: I wish they may consider, How infinitely they are bound to God for the gracious watchfulness of his good Providence over them, and for putting so vast a difference betwixt them and others, as not to let them lose one hair of their heads by ruinated-Buildings, whereby others have lost their lives: And, may such, as have occasion to pass-by such places from day to day, duly consider, That God hath created more dangers than were formerly; and therefore ought they to walk with more circumspection

cumſpection than they had wont to do, and to be *in the fear of the Lord* all the day long; and to be in readineſs for the worſt that can befall them; as men that carry their lives in their hands, and do walk in the midſt of menacing-perils. There is a Promiſe, (if I may ſo call it,) *Job.* 5. 23. that it were good for a man to have intereſt in, eſpecially at ſuch a time as this; *Thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones*, as well as *the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee.*

MEDITATION XXXV.

Of the Fire, its not exceeding the Liberties of the City.

WHen I conſider the Compaſs this fire took, how far it went, and where it ſtopt, I ſee cauſe to wonder at ſeveral things; *Firſt*, That it did burn much-what about the Proportion of the whole City, within the Walls; that is to ſay, look how much was left ſtanding within the Walls, (as if it had been by way of exchange and compenſation,) ſo much, or thereabouts it burnt without. *Secondly*, That though it threw down the Gates, and got without the Walls, yet it no where went beyond the Liberties of the City of *London*; as if the Bars had been a greater fence againſt it, (which indeed were no fence at all) than the Gates and Walls could be. Had the Cittizens gone in Proceſſion, or had the Lord Mayor and his Brethren took a Survey of the Bounds and Limits of their Juriſdiction, they could not have kept much more within compaſs than the Fire did. Did not he who ſets bounds to the Sea, and ſaith to the proud Waves

waves thereof, hitherto ſhalt thou go and no further; I ſay, did not he ſay the ſame thing to thoſe proud flames? How admirable is the work of God, in cauſing Creatures that are without Reaſon, yea, without Life, to act, as if they well underſtood what they did? Doth he not cauſe *the day-ſpring to know its place*, *Job* 38. 12. and *the Sun to know its going down*, *Pſalm* 104. 19. *The Storck in the heavens, knoweth her appointed time, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, obſerve the time of their comming*, *Jer.* 8. 7. When I conſider, how the fire took juſt ſuch a proportion, as if it had been markt out, it brings to mind that uſual ſaying, That God doth all things in weight and meaſure, and makes me think of ſuch paſſages of Scripture, as where God ſaith, *Iſaiah* 28. 16. that *He would lay Judgment to the Line, and Righteouſneſs to the Plummet*. Alſo, where God ſpeaks of *a people meted out* (*viz.* for deſtruction, *Iſa.* 18. 2. and 7.) *and troden under foot*: Alſo, where it is ſaid of God, that *He weighed out a path to his anger*, *Pſalm* 78. 50. Which we tranſlate, that *He made a way to his anger*, the meaning is, He did proportion it, as if he had diſpenſed it by weight.

How great a Mercy was it, that the Suburbs were ſpared, conſidering, how great, how populous, and how poor they were? Being ſo great and capacious, they can contain all the exiles of the City; but, it had been impoſſible for the City, if it had ſtood, and they had been burnt, to have contained all the out-caſts of the more ſpacious Suburbs. Conſidering their populouſneſs, if the fire had fallen to their lot, poſſibly, five times ſo many perſons as now are, had been undone,

undone; and ſo many families had been reduced to utmoſt penury, as all *England* had ſcarce been ſufficient to relieve. Laſtly, conſidering, their Poverty they had much more generally been unable to bear their loſſes than Citizens, or thoſe within the Walls were. Neither was the ſparing of the Suburbs, a thing more deſirable, than it was improbable, when the fire was in its Meridian or Zenith, if I may ſo call it. For, as the Sun, which ſets out in the Eaſt, finiſheth not its race, till it come about to the Weſt; ſo did this dreadfull Fire threaten not to ſtop, till it had run thorough the Suburbs as well as the City its ſelf. But God, *who cauſeth it to rain upon one City, and not upon another*, and, who kept that Storm of fire from falling upon *Zoar*, which deſtroyed *Sodom* and three other Cities, of that which was called *Pentapolis*, He thus divided the flames of fire, that moſt parts of the City ſhould have their ſhare, but the Suburbs, though in great danger, ſhould have none. I think, if men had deſigned, to have burnt ſo far, and no further, as eaſy as it was to kindle, it was hard to extinguiſh ſuch a fire, when, and where they would: But if any malicious perſons, did conduct it ſo far, and there leave it, *What they have done ſecretly, will one day be proclaimed upon the Houſe-top.*

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MEDITATION XXXVI.

Upon the Suburbs coming into more requeſt then ever, ſince the fire.

HOw much more conſiderable are the Suburbs now, than they lately were? Some places of deſpicable termination, and as mean account, but a few moneths ſince, ſuch as *Hounds-ditch*, and *Shorditch*, do now contain not a few Citizens of very good faſhion. Philoſophers ſay, that *Corruptio unius eſt generatio alterius*: ſo was the marring of the City, the making of the Suburbs. What rich commodities cannot the Suburbs now ſupply us with, which heretofore could be had onely within the walls. Time was that rich Citizens would almoſt have held their Noſes, if they had paſt by thoſe places where now it may be they are conſtrained to dwell: they would hardly have kept *the dogs of their flock* (to uſe *Jobs* words with ſome variation) where now they are forced to keep themſelves. Had *London* been ſtanding; in the places where ſome of them do now inhabit, *Zijim* and *Ochim* might have dwelt for *them, and the Satyrs might have danced there* (to allude to Iſa. 13. 21) In how great requeſt at this day, is poor *Piedmont* as I may call it (*Southwark* I mean) which lay ſubmiſſively at the feet of *London*, like an humble valley at the foot of a high mountain? What multitudes of Citizens have flockt to it, as glad to be free amongſt thoſe that were not free themſelves, the fire having as it were broken down the partition-wall, betwixt thoſe that were Free-men of *London*, and thoſe that were not.

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If the Suburbs had been burnt, VVhither would the Inhabitants have fled? Trade within the VValls they might not, as Citizens may without; which liberty they having now taken, (as it is their due;) What are the Suburbs now becom, but as it were the in-ſide of the late-Famous City, carried and placed without the Walls? *Lond n* its ſelf (by a kind of Μετεμψύχωσις) the Soul of the City, being now tranſlated into the Body of the Suburbs: So that he, who would now look for *London*, muſt look for moſt of it, not within, but without the Walls. How eaſie is it with God to pull down one and ſet up another? *To pluck the mighty from their ſeat, and to exalt the poor and needy?* VVe read, though in another ſenſe, that every *Valley ſhall be exalted, and every Mountain and Hill ſhall be made low.* VVho can but think of *Hannah*'s words, ſhew ng, how God turns the VVorld up-ſide-down like a VVheel, the uppermoſt Spoke whereof is quickly down, and the loweſt at the top, 1 Sam. 2. 5. *They that were full have hired out themſelves for bread, and they that were hungry have ceaſed: So that the barren have born ſeven, and ſhe that hath many children is waxen feeble:* And Verſ. 7. *The Lord makes poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up.* It is good counſel that an excellent man gives, *viz.* That we ſhould deſpiſe no mans preſent condition, ſeeing we do not know his Deſtiny. It ſhould ſeem, the poor deſpiſed Suburbs were deſtin'd to hold up their heads more than ever, when the noble City ſhould lie in duſt and aſhes, as now it doth. Let *Londoners* not think much of it, that the providence of God hath caſt them without the Gates and VValls of *London*; but, rather conſider of ſuch expreſſions as thoſe, *Heb.* 13. 12, 13, 14.

How that Christ ſuffered without the Gate; Let us go therefore to him without the Camp, bearing his reproach, For here we have no continuing City. I ſay, Let them think of thoſe words, and prepare for another-guiſe ſuffering *without the Gate*, than as now they do; and bearing another-guiſe-*reproach* than now they bear, for this is next to none; it being more proper to ſay, and think, That they have made the Suburbs honourable; than, That the Suburbs have made them deſpicable.

MEDITATION XXXVII.

Upon the Tongue being a Fire, &c. *James* 3. 6.

WHen the Scripture would expreſs how miſchievous a Member an evil Tongue is, it ſaith, *It is a Fire.* Fire hath done a world of miſchief one time or other, and ſo have evil Tongues; whereupon it is added, *That the Tongue is a world of iniquity.* There is a fire that is called *Ignis fatuus* (*quod efficit tales*;) becauſe it makes fools of men, leading them out of their way: So *Solomon*, ſpeaking concerning a young man ſeduced by a Harlot, ſaith, *With her much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield*, Prov. 7. 21. Fire from ſmall beginnings ſpreads it ſelf very far, ſo do the evils of mens Tongues. So, *Solomon* ſpeaking of a Fool, ſaith, *The beginning of the words of his mouth is fooliſhneſs, and the end of his talk is miſchievous madneſs*, Eccleſ. 10. 13. They are high expreſſions which St. *James* uſeth concerning the Tongue, telling us, that *it defileth the whole body, and ſetteth on fire the courſe of nature, and it is ſet on fire of Hell.*

By

By *ſetting on fire the courſe of nature*, we may underſtand thoſe great Combuſtions which the tongues of men have made in the VVorld, of which there are three famous Inſtances that come to mind, ſufficient to demonſtrate that, ſo as men may uſe and imploy their Tongues, by means thereof the whole VVorld may be put into a flame. How did the Princes of *Succoth* fire *Gideon*, by that upbraiding Queſtion mentioned Judg. 8.5. *Are the hands of Zeba and Zalmunnah now in thy hands, that we ſhould give bread unto thine Army?* To which he replyed, *VVhen the Lord ſhall give Zeba and Zalmunnah into mine hands, then will I tear your fleſh with the briars of the wilderneſs, and with thorns*: And we know he was as good as his word. Did not *Nabals* churliſh Tongue kindle ſuch a fire in *Davids* breaſt, as might have conſumed all his family, if the greater prudence of *Abigail* his wife had not ſeaſonably extinguiſht it, 1 *Sam.* 25. 10. It was gone ſo far, that *David* had ſworn, *He would not leave of them that did pertain to Nabal by the morning-light any that piſſed againſt a wall*, Verſ. 22. And all this becauſe of a provoking Anſwer he ſent him, ſaying, *VVho is David? Many ſervants nowadayes break away from their Maſters*, &c. Yea, the Tongue of *David* himſelf, (at what time he came with a lie in his mouth to *Abimelech*) proved no otherwiſe than a fire, which did conſume at once four-ſcore and five of the Lords Prieſts, 1 *Sam.* 22.19. By the ſame reaſon, that ſo great Combuſtions were raiſed by a few ſparks falling from the Tongues of particular men, may the whole VVorld be deſtroyed by the fire of mens Tongues, ſuch, and ſo great as it may be, which may give us an accompt, of what the Text ſaith concerning the Tongue, its *ſetting on fire the whole*

courſe of nature; Now, whereas he adds that the *Tongue it's ſelf, is ſet on fire of hell*, me-thinks he ſpeaks of a wicked Tongue, as if it were a ſacrifice, a Holocauſt to the Devil (as the Apoſtle ſaith in another caſe; *The things which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to Devils, and not to God*, 1 Cor. 10. 20.) For whereas the ſacrifices which God did accept were kindled by fire from heaven, a depraved Tongue, is ſaid to be kindled by a fire, worſe then that which is common, *viz.* by fire from hell, as if it were in token of the Devils preparing, and challenging of it for himſelf.

Yet as ill a conſtruction as calling the tongue a fire, may bear in one ſenſe; yet in another acceptation of that Metaphor, the Tongue ought to be a Fire, and it is its excellency ſo to be. The holy Ghoſt came down upon the Apoſtles, in the *form of fiery cloven tongues*, Act. 2. 3. God did touch *the mouth of his prophet with a coal from his altar*, in token that *his iniquity was taken away, and his ſin purged*, Iſa. 6. 7. There are words that may be uſed to enemies which would be like *heaping coals of fire upon their heads*, in that good ſenſe that *Solomon* wiſheth us ſo to do. May my tongue be ſuch a fire as one of theſe, may it be a flame breaking forth, to vent, and expreſs a fire of God that burns within: may it be a fire conſuming the vices of others by faithful admonitions, and reproofs, in kindling and increaſing zeal in others, by warm and affectionate counſels; a fire refreſhing the hearts of others by a due and ſeaſonable application of divine and comfortable conſiderations. They whoſe tongues are a fire in the worſe ſenſe, *viz.* inflaming the world with contention, concupiſcence, and other noiſome luſts, ſhall have for their reward *ſharp arrows of the Almighty*

Almighty with coals of Juniper, Pſal. 120.4. Yea, the time is coming, when, in caſe they repent not, they ſhall cry out with *Dives*, *Father Abraham, ſend Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, tormented in this flame*, Luk. 16. As fire is one of uſefulleſt things in the world, when well imployed; ſo is the Tongue of man; (therefore called his glory): but as that, when it exceeds it's bounds, is greatly pernicious, ſo are the Tongues of men; and therefore, look what care is taken to keep fire within our Chymnies, and other places proper for it, the like ſhould be taken to ſet a watch before the door of our lips, that we offend not with our Tongues: no wonder S. *James* ſhould ſay, that *He who offendeth not in words, is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body.* For, he that can maſter his tongue can maſter fire, which of all creatures is moſt untameable.

MEDITATION XXXVIII.

Upon the Angels being called flames of fire, Heb. 1.

IS it for their Agility, or for their ſpirituality, or for their great power, or for their likeneſs to God that Angels are called flames of fire? or rather, is it not for all of theſe? How quickly doth a flaſh of lightnings ſhoot its ſelf from Eaſt to Weſt? Nor are the Angels of God leſs nimble. Light and fire (and flames comprehend both) are as ſpiritual bodies as any we know, the fitter therefore to reſemble thoſe who are meer Spirits, and as the Text calls them *miniſtring Spirits*. The power of fire, and particularly in deſtroying, we know to our coſt. And did that ſingle Angel ſhow himſelf leſs powerful, *who in-*

one night destroyed a hundred fourscore & five thousand men belonging to the host of Senacherib, Isa. 37. 36. It is not for nothing, that *Angels are called Principalities and Powers*. Neither have good Angels less power to save, than to destroy, when they are appointed thereunto. God himself being called a fire, it is probable enough, that Angels go by the same name, because of the resemblance which they bear to God, who have more of Gods image than man himself though man hath more of it then all other creatures. The Chariots of fire which *Elisha* saw, 2 *King.* 6. 17. What were they, but so many Angels of God that were sent to guard him which made him say, there were more with than against him. Yea, the fiery chariot in which *Elijah* was said to have been taken up to heaven, possibly was no other then a convoy of Angels, such as carried *Lazarus* into *Abrahams* bosom. How happy are the Servants of God in having a guard of Angels? How safe are they, being compassed about with such walls of fire? No wonder, that the *righteous are more bold than a Lion*, as *Solomon* speaks; wild beasts are afraid of fire, and if there be a sort of men as savage as they, yet can those good Angels which God hath ordered to protect his people, keep those Salvages in awe. What a comfort is it that God hath such nimble Messengers to dispatch upon any expedition for our good? An host of Angels can be with us presently, even as soon as lightning can glance thorough the air. It is well for believers that Angels are so powerful that they excell in strength, seeing they are theirs, appointed to minister for their good. In how much less danger are Gods children many times, than they apprehend themselves, because their guard is spiritual and invisible; which made *Elisha*'s servant

more

more afraid one while than otherwiſe he would have been, & than afterwards he was. If every Angel be a flame of fire, what the Prophet told his man in another caſe, may be applied in this, *There are more (flames and fires* I mean) *with Gods people than are againſt them.*

MEDITATION XXXIX.

Upon the word of God it's being compared to fire, Jer. 23. 29.

HOw ſhall we underſtand that queſtion, *Jer.* 23. 29. *Is not my word like as a fire ſaith the Lord?* Wherein conſiſts the reſemblance betwixt the word of God and fire? Surely it's warming the hearts of men in whom it takes place, is one reaſon of it's being ſo called: For ſo ſaid the Diſciples of Chriſt *Did not our hearts even burn within us, whilſt he opened the Scriptures to us?* Luk. 24. 32. Or elſe it may be ſo called from it's efficacy; in which ſenſe it is alſo called a Hammer *which breaketh the rocks in pieces*: Fire is able to demoliſh the ſtrongeſt places, of wch we many have ſad inſtances at this day; & ſo the Word is ſaid to be mighty through God to pull down ſtrong holds. We read of Gold tried by fire, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. and is not the Word of God a trying thing? It is ſaid (I ſhall not here examine in what ſenſe) that *God ſent forth his word and tried* Joſeph. *Pſal.* 10. 19. Who knows not the purifying nature of fire, whereby metals are refined? and did not Chriſt aſcribe the like virtue to his Word, ſaying, *Now are ye clean through the word that I have ſpoken to you?* What more piercing then fire, and in that reſpect alſo, it is much an Embleme of the Word of

God, which is said, to be *sharper than a two-edged sword piercing to the dividing a-sunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow*, Heb. 4. 12.

These are but some of the Parallels that might be made, betwixt the word of God and Fire. He, whose word it is, would have it to be as Fire. And if it be Fire, where it hath once broken out, and got head, it will be hard to smother or suppresse it (as that Evangelical Fire, which was kindled by *Luther* in *Germany*, could never be extinguished to this day). Saint *Paul* saith, though he *suffered bonds, yet the word of God was not bound*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. And in *Phil.* 1. 12. he saith, that the troubles *which befell him, had happened rather to the furtherance of the Gospel; and many did wax confident by his bonds, to speak the word without fear.* If the word of God be Fire (as it is), I wonder not that there are such combustions in the world by means of it; as Christ, telling us what (through the corruption of men) would insue upon his Gospel, saith, *He came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword*, *Mat.* 10. 34. It is not Gods word, but something else those men would have, who would have nothing preached to them, that should be as fire to consume their Lusts, or to make their consciences smart, at the remembrance of them. That which is not apt to search and pierce, is nothing akin to fire, and therefore cannot be the word of God, which is said to be *quick and powerful* as fire its self. The fires which God kindleth for the good of the world (whereof his word is one of the chief) woe be to any that shall go about to quench. Quenching of prophecying is next unto quenching of the Spirit, yea, and is one way of doing it, as Divines observe.

I ſee cauſe, to bleſſe the God of heaven, who hath created ſome fires as profitable as others are miſchievous, namely, his word for one, a fire that never doth hurt, otherwiſe than by accident (neither indeed would other fires, kept within their due bounds) but ſo much good, as no tongue can expreſs. O Lord, that through thine infinite goodneſs, I might experiment in my ſelf and others, all thoſe excellent properties of fire meeting in thy word, of which I have now been ſpeaking; that my heart and theirs might burn within us at the hearing of it, as did the hearts of thy Diſciples, that it may be mighty through thee to pull down all the ſtrong-holds of Sin and Sathan that are within us, that it might trye us as gold is tryed in the fire, and at the ſame time refined and purified; that it might pierce, unto the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints and marrow; that the ſin, which is, as it were, bred in our bones, may be gotten out of the very fleſh. May the fire of thy word, have ſuch influence as this upon us, we ſhall then be ſure to eſcape the fire of thy wrath, and to arrive to that happineſs, which is called, *The inheritance of the Saints in Light*, *Col.* 1. 12.

MEDITATION XL.

Upon the ſpoiling of Conduits and other Aqueducts, by this Fire.

ME-thinks the ſeveral Conduits that were in *London*, ſtood like ſo many little (but ſtrong) Forts, to confront and give check, to that great enemy, Fire, if any occaſion ſhould be. There, me-thinks

me-thinks the water was, as it were, intrenched and ingarriſoned. The ſeveral Pipes and Vehicles of water, that were within thoſe Conduits, all of them charged with water, till, by the turning of the Cocks, they were diſcharged again; were, as ſo many Souldiers within thoſe Forts, with their Muſquets charged, and ready to be diſcharged upon the drawing of their ſeveral Cocks, to keep and defend thoſe places. And look how Enemies are wont to deal with thoſe Caſtles, which they take to be impregnable, and diſpair of ever getting by ſtorm, *viz.* to attempt the ſtarving of them by a cloſe Siege, intercepting all proviſion of Victuals from coming at them; ſo went the fire to work with thoſe little Caſtles of ſtone, which were not eaſie for it to burn down (witneſs their ſtanding to this day); ſpoiled them or almoſt ſpoiled them it hath for preſent, by cutting off thoſe ſupplies of water, which had wont to flow to them, melting thoſe leaden Channels, in which the water had wont to be conveyed to them, and thereby, as it were, ſtarving thoſe Garriſons, which they could not take by ſtorm.

What the Scripture ſpeaks of the Land of *Jordan*, that *it was well watered every where*, before the Lord deſtroyed *Sodom*, *even as the Garden of the Lord*, like the Land of *Egypt* (made fruitful by the River *Nilus*); the ſame might have been ſaid of *London* before this fire, It was watered like *Paradiſe* its ſelf: yea, whereas *Paradiſe* had but one River, (though *it parted into four heads*, *Gen.* 2. 10.) *London* had two at leaſt, deviding its ſelf, or rather devided into many branches, and diſperſing its ſelf ſeveral wayes. For, beſides the noble River of *Thames*, gliding not only by the ſides, but thorow

row the bowels of *London*, there was another, called the *New-River*, brought from *Hartfordſhire* thither, by the induſtry and ingenuity of that worthy and never to be forgotten Knight, Sir *Hugh Middleton*, the ſpring of whoſe deſerved fame is ſuch, as the late Fire its ſelf (though the dreadfulleſt of all that we have known) hath not, nor will not be able to dry up; but continue it will, a Fountain of praiſe and honour, bubling up to all poſterity.

As nature, by Veins and Arteries, ſome great, ſome ſmall, placed up and down all parts of the Body, miniſtreth blood and nouriſhment to every member thereof, and part of each member; ſo was that wholſome Water, which was as neceſſary for the good of *London*, as blood is for the life and health of the body, conveyed by Pipes, wooden or metalline, as by ſo many veins into all parts of that famous City. If water were, as we may call it, the blood of *London*, then were its ſeveral Conduits, as it were, the Liver and Spleen of that City (which are reckoned as the Fountains of blood in humane bodies) for that the great Trunks of veins conveying blood about the body, are ſeated there, as great Roots fixed in the Earth, ſhooting out their branches divers and ſundry wayes. But alas! how were thoſe Livers inflamed, and how unfit have they been ſince to do their wonted Office? What pity it is, to ſee thoſe breaſts of *London* (for ſo I may alſo call them) almoſt dryed up: and the poor Citizens mean time ſo loth as they are, to be weaned from their former place. They were lovely ſtreams indeed, which did refreſh that noble City, one of which was alwayes at work, pouring out its ſelf when the reſt lay ſtill.

As if the Fire had been angry with the poor old

old Tankard-bearers, both Men and Women, for propagating that Element which was contrary to it; and carrying it upon their ſhoulders as it were in State and Triumph; it hath even deſtroyed their Trade, and threatned to make them periſh by fire, who had wont to live by water. Seeing there are few or none to ſuck thoſe Breaſts at this day, the matter is not ſo great; if they be almoſt empty and dry at preſent, may they but fill again, and their Milk be renewed, ſo ſoon as the honeſt Citizens ſhall come again to their former ſcituations. O Lord, that it might be thy good pleaſure to let *London* be firſt reſtor'd, and ever after preſerved from Fire; and when once reſtored, let it be as plentifully and commodiouſly ſupplied with water as ever it was formerly: Make it once again as the Paradiſe of God; but never ſuffer any deſtroying Serpent any more to come there.

MEDITATION XLI.

Upon the Retorts and Reproaches of Papiſts, occaſioned by this fire.

ME-thinks I hear ſome *Roman-Catholicks*, (as they are pleaſed to call themſelves,) ſaying, Some of your Proteſtants did confidently foretel, That within this preſent year 1666 *Rome* ſhould down; *Babylon* ſhould fall; Antichriſt ſhould be deſtroyed: But, now your own City is deſtroyed in the ſelf-ſame-year; which (according to you) doth ſhow, that *London* was the true-*Babylon*, and that the true Antichriſt is amongſt your ſelves. Yet, upon due examination, it will be found, that there is as little ſtrength in the Argument which they have brought,

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as there is ſenſe in the name whereby they are called, *viz. Roman-Catholicks:* which is as much as to ſay, Members of the particular Univerſal-Church; or of that part of the Church which is the whole; or of *Rome*, which is all the World. VVe read of *Names of blaſphemy which were upon the heads of the Beaſt*, Rev. 13. 1. But, as if that were not ſufficient they have added a Name, which is perfect non-ſenſe for the reaſon aforeſaid; but, that by the way. Their deſign is, to prove, that Antichriſt is amongſt us; and, that *London* was that Myſtical-*Babylon* ſo often ſpoken of, according to what was lately found in a Seditious Libel; *Do to South-Babel, &c.* meaning to the Southern-part of *London* yet ſtanding, *&c.* But alaſs! How weak are the Premiſſes from which they have drawn theſe concluſions.

Their Argument put into a Syllogiſm, is this; If *London* were deſtroyed the ſelf-ſame-year in which ſome did Propheſie that *Babylon* and *Antichriſt* ſhould be deſtroyed; then is *London* that which the Scripture calls *Babylon* and *Anti-chriſt* amongſt the Proteſtants: But *London* was, *&c. Ergo.* If the VVorld miſtake not, ſome of you have proved the Minor ſo ſtrongly, (*viz.* the deſtruction of *London,*) and in ſuch a year, that no body can diſprove it: But, the conſequence of the Major-Propoſition hath no force at all in it; For, what if ſome did Propheſie the deſtruction of *Babylon* and *Antichriſt* in-66, and *London* only was deſtroyed that year, from what Principle of Scripture, or Reaſon, can you thence infer, that *London* is Myſtical-*Babylon*? For, firſt of all, VVho were they that did Propheſie ſuch a thing? VVere they not a few inconſiderable Enthuſiaſtical Men, to whom, not one Proteſtant of a thouſand gave credit? For, believe

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me, Enthuſiaſts and Proteſtants are no convertible terms; foraſmuch as not every hundredth or thouſandth Proteſtant is any thing of an Enthuſiaſt. VVe do not uſe to charge upon your Church the Extravagant Bablings of one or a few particular Papiſts, but the profeſſed Doctrines and Tenets of that which yourſelves call the Church of *Rome*. Do us the ſame right, and forbear to charge upon Proteſtants, as ſuch, what the Proteſtant Church doth diſavow.

Poſſibly they were ſome of your own Religion, ſome Romaniſts, putting on the mask of Proteſtants (as hath bin uſual with them to do, for ſiniſter ends) who foreknowing, that *London* would be burnt this year (as nothing is more eaſy, than for men to know what themſelves intend to do) gave out, that *Babylon* and Anti-chriſt would be deſtroyed in ſixty ſix, for that very end, that when they had once effected the burying of *London* in aſhes, they might have ſome pretence to write this Epitaph, *Here lies Babylon*, here lies that which was the ſeat of the true Anti-chriſt; thereby rolling away the reproach of *Babylon* and Anti-chriſt from themſelves to whom it belongs, upon the Proteſtants whom it concerns not.

Sir. Edw. Sand. *Spec. Europ.*

But take heed how you deny Anti-chriſt to be amongſt you, for by that means you quit one Argument, which ſome of your writers have uſed to prove *Rome* to be a true Church, for that it is ſaid, that *Anti-chriſt ſitteth in the Temple of God*, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 4. But, if upon further conſideration, you would not be known to have Anti-chriſt amongſt you, let me tell you, that the *Beaſt* ſpoken of in Scripture, is ſo thoroughly markt, that it is eaſy

eaſy to diſtinguiſh him from the Proteſtant Church, and from *Rome* heatheniſh and whatſoever elſe he would turn over his name to. Me-thinks that one Text, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 4. would plainly enough decipher Anti-chriſt, if there were none but that, *Who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God*, or that is worſhipped; ſo that he, as God, ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God. The Emperours of *Rome*-heatheniſh ſate not in the Temple of God, they were not within the pales of the profeſſedly Chriſtian Church, therefore they were not the man of ſin, and Anti-chriſt there ſpoken of; but he is to be ſought and found amongſt thoſe that are called Chriſtians. Now amongſt Chriſtians there are none that exalt themſelves above all that are called God, that is, above all Magiſtrates which are called Gods, challenging a Primacy and Supremacy to themſelvs over all Chriſtians, both Subjects and Princes; I ſay there are none that do ſo, but the Popes of Rome ſucceſſively: whence it comes to paſs that Papiſts are wont to refuſe the Oath of Supremacy to their Native Prince, as believing not their own Prince to be Supream under God over his own Subjects, but the Pope of *Rome* over both him and them. Moreover, who is it that ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf to be God, that is, aſſumeth to himſelf thoſe things which are proper and particuliar to God onely, as namely, To forgive ſins? For none can forgive ſins but God onely: I ſay, who, but the reſpective Popes of *Rome* do take upon them by their own power, and in their own name to forgive ſin: the groſsneſs of which practice did firſt provoke *Luther*, of a ſtiff Monk, to become a zealous Proteſtant. Yea, who amongſt thoſe that were called Chriſtians, did ever exalt himſelf above

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all that is worſhipped (by which may be meant the true God), ſaving the reſpective Popes of *Rome*? And they have done it time after time in taking upon them to diſpenſe with the Commiſſion of ſin, as with the taking of unlawful Oaths, and ſuch like. Now God himſelf though he remit ſin to ſuch as truly believe, and repent; yet he never did, nor, by reaſon of the holineſs of his nature, ever could give men free leave, and licence to do that which is ſinful. It is true that God gave the Iſraelites Commiſſion to borrow the Jewels and Earings of the Egyptians, and never to return them again: but that was not a liberty to ſteal; for God, Whoſe all thoſe things were, and whoſe are all things, was pleaſed to alienate the propriety; to take thoſe things from the Egyptians, and give them to the Iſraelites.

A fourth Character of Anti-chriſt, is, that his Coming is, with lying wonders, *verſ.* 9. that is, with feigned miracles. Now who amongſt all that are called Chriſtians, trade ſo much (if at all) in thoſe things, as doth the Church of *Rome*? How do the Romaniſts (they and only they) abound with miracles; and all fictitious, and no other then groſs impoſture? Tell thoſe people that have no Bibles to conſult, but what are in an unknown language or elſe perverted by a falſe tranſlation, or a corrupt gloſs; I ſay, tell them the Anti-chriſt is amongſt the Proteſtants, and that *L ndon* was the Myſtical *Babylon* of which the Scripture ſpeaks, *Sic notus Ulyſſes*? Is Anti-chriſt no better known, think you, to them that have ſeen his Picture and Deſcription in holy Writ. Alas! ſuch coarſe Wares as is the ridiculous aſſerting of *London* to be *Babylon*, will go off no where, but in a dark ſhop, or by a falſe light.

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Your blinded Moles, that live as it were under ground, may be made to believe that *Rome* is the new *Jeruſalem* ſpoken of *Rev.*21.1. and *London* what ever you pleaſe to call it, or any thing elſe where-with you ſhall think fit to delude them by thoſe artifices which you call Pious-Frauds (which is as proper an expreſſion as Pious-Devils): but our people converſe with the Sun, I mean the light of Scripture. They have read the book of the *Revelations* of Saint *John*, and though they do not pretend to underſtand every thing therein contained, yet they doubt not what is meant by *the beaſt's having ſeven heads and ten horns*, Rev. 13.1. becauſe they find Saint *John* himſelf expounding it, *Rev.* 17.9. *The ſeven heads are ſeven mountains.* And there are ſeven Kings (that is, Forms of governments) *Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come*, &c. Theſe paſſages agree & quadrate to *Rome* exactly. It was built upon ſeven Hills yet to be ſeen, though ſome of them be now without the walls of the City. It had ſeven forms of Government, whereof five were fallen in Saints *John*'s time, *viz.* Kings, Conſuls, Tribunes, Decemvir's, Dictators: one is, ſaith he, that is, Emperors were then in being, the other was not yet come, *viz.* Popes. But do theſe expreſsions, all or any of them, agree to *London*, as they agree to *Rome*? Doth that ſtand upon juſt ſeven hills? Hath that had juſt ſeven forms of Government, five whereof were fallen in Saint *John*'s time, and one other in being? With what face then can you affirm *London* to be *Babylon*? But I ſee, Thoſe men have impudence enough to aſſert any thing, who have taught their followers to believe every thing they pleaſe to aſſert.

A faith of Legends (and only that) may be ſufficient to aſſure men that *London* was Myſtical-Babylon; for that I take to be more than a faith of Miracles: the latter being a faith of Poſsibles, the other of Impoſsibilities and contradictions. Therefore though ſome of the ſillier ſort of Papiſts may believe, and others may boldly aſſert the ſame though they believe it not (as they do in many other caſes): yet Proteſtants can never be perſwaded to it whilſt the world ſtands; nor any other perſons, that are from under the power of groſs Ignorance, or Prejudice: As for the name Anti-chriſt, Who knows not that it imports one that ſets himſelf in the ſtead or place of Chriſt, as well as againſt Chriſt; the Præpoſition ἀντι, ſignifying both *pro*, and *con*, that is, as well For, as Againſt. Now, Who amongſt thoſe that are called Proteſtants, can be charged with ſetting himſelf in the place of Chriſt, as if he would be taken for Chriſt himſelf? But that do the Popes of *Rome* ſucceſsively, whilſt they affirm to themſelves, thoſe things which are peculiar to Chriſt alone, as namely Forgiveneſs of ſin, &c. I had forborn this diſcourſe, but that I have been advertiſed of the reproaches of ſome of the Papiſts, who, after the Baptiſm of fire we have lately undergone, go about to Baptize us, and our City, with their ſpittle, by the names of *Babylon* and Anti-chriſt, due only to *Rome*, and Romaniſts: and God forbid that whilſt Papiſts do unjuſtly aſperſe Proteſtants (whoſe Religion is that which the Laws of *England* doth eſtabliſh) Proteſtants ſhould not have leave, and take heart enough to vindicate themſelves. In a word, if *London* be Myſtical *Babylon* (ſo confident am I it is not), let it never riſe again; if *Rome* be not, let it never

never fall: and, on the other hand, let *Rome* ſo fall as it proves to be *Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth*, Rev. 17. 5: and let *London* ſo riſe and flouriſh again (and only ſo) as it ſhall be found to be otherwiſe.

MEDITATION XLII.

Upon the Pains which the Kings Majeſty *is ſaid to have taken in helping to extinguiſh the Fire.*

I Was no eye-witneſs, but have been informed, that when the Fire came near to *Cripplegate*, His Majeſty being then and there preſent, did, in His own Perſon, take great Pains (no leſs, as was told, then if He had been a poor Labourer,) to promote the extinction of it. Poſſibly ſome weak and inconſiderate perſons, that ſaw His Majeſty at that time ſtooping ſo low, might in their hearts deſpiſe Him for it, (as *Michal* did *David*, for leaping and dancing before the Ark, 2 *Sam.* 6. 16. and 20.) ſaying in deriſion, *How glorious was the King of* England *to day?* as ſhe, *How glorious was the King of* Iſrael? *&c.* But wiſe and religious perſons, that had ſeen *David* in that poſture, would have ſpoken the ſame words in good earneſt, which ſhe ſpake in ſcorn, meaning, as they ſaid, *How glorious indeed was the King of* Iſrael, whilſt, tranſported with holy zeal, he leapt before the Ark, which is called, *Dancing before the Lord?* The like can I ſay from mine heart of our Dread Soveraign: *How glorious was He* in truth, and in reality, when He took upon Him the form, or rather the work of a mean-man; and vouchſafed His helping-Hand to ſtop that diſmal Fire, when it was in its full carreer? Had I ſeen

Him with His Crown upon His Head, His Scepter in His Hand, His Noble Senators all waiting upon Him in their Parliament-Robes, or in all the State in which He could have been ſeen, (*Cant.* 3. 11.) either on the day of His Coronation, or of His Eſpouſals; I could not have reverenced Him more than I ſhould have done, if I had beheld Him with a Bucket in His Hand, pouring water upon the Flames; or than I do, ſo often as I think of Him in ſome ſuch poſture of moſt kind and obliging condeſcenſion. Me-thinks it was but equal that Chriſt ſhould be more loved, but not leſs honoured, when he humbled himſelf ſo far, as to take a *Towel*, and therewith *to waſh, and to wipe his Diſciples feet*, John 13. 4.

Kings never act more like themſelves than when they are doing good to their Subjects, and are ſnatching them, or their Concerns, as fire-brands out of the Fire: forasmuch as the Scripture ſaith, *That Magiſtrates are the Miniſters of God to thoſe that are under them for good*, Rom. 13. 4. The *Roman* Emperors had wont to iſſue out their Commands to their Soldiers, not in the third, but in the firſt Perſon: So *Pertinax* his Word and Motto was *Militemus*; not, *March ye*; but, *Let us March on*; (including himſelf.) So *Septimius Severus* his word was *Laboremus, Let us be doing*. In like manner, our Gracious Soveraign is ſaid to have ſtretcht forth His own Royal Hands to aſſiſt the putting out of thoſe Aſpiring Flames, which ſeemed to expect a Princely Extinguiſher: That was ſuch a kind of Royal Aid, as all Subjects muſt needs be in love with; and, Why not more free to that other, which goes by ſuch a name in the remembrance of this? One of the Ancients did wiſh, to have ſeen

Chriſt

Chriſt in the Fleſh, *Paul* in the Pulpit, and *Rome* in its ancient Glory. Much rather, at leſt-wiſe than the laſt of theſe, would I have ſeen that ſight I am now ſpeaking of, *viz.* His moſt Excellent Majeſty beſtirring Himſelf, to give check to thoſe Flames which threatned to lay both His great City and Suburbs all in aſhes. Who had the faces to ſtand ſtill and look on, (as many did at other times,) whilſt their Soveraign Himſelf was ſo imployed? Whilſt Princes work, Subjects cannot have the confidence to be idle. Oh the power and efficacy of Princely Examples! *Regis ad exemplum*, &c. When Princes will help to extinguiſh fires themſelves, the work is like to ſucceed; and when that is done, the greateſt thanks are due to them, next unto the King of Kings.

I wiſh, there were not many other fires at this day within the Bowels of this Nation, *viz.* of fears and jealouſies, envy and emulation, wrath and revenge, diſſatisfaction and diſcontent, diſſenſion and diviſion: May he, who is the *Wonderful*, *Counſellor*, and *God only wiſe*, inſtruct His Majeſty, how, and which way to extinguiſh them: and mean-time to increaſe one other fire (and only that) *viz.* of love and affection; firſt to God, nextly to Himſelf, and then amongſt all his Subjects one towards another. *Solomon* tells of *a poor man, who by his wiſdom ſaved a little City, when a great king came againſt it, and beſieged it*, Eccleſ. 9. 14. By this means may His Majeſty ſave, and preſerve, not only one City but three Kingdoms, which thoſe fires threaten to deſtroy: (for our Saviour tells us, *That a kingdom divided againſt it ſelf cannot ſtand:*) And though *no man remembred that poor man* (becauſe he was poor) yet when a more glorious action ſhall be done by a

Princely hand, ſurely no man will or can forget it. Will it not be a conſiderable acceſſion of honour even to a great King, to be inrolled amongſt the Peace-makers, whom *Chriſt* pronounceth *bleſſed*? As for His Majeſties inclination to all ſuch Atchievements, as ſweetneſs of temper may induce men to, let all His Subjects be well perſwaded of, by the tears he ſhed, when he beheld the Flames of *London*, which I had not reported but from a very credible Author. How amiable a ſight is it to behold Kings weeping over the miſeries of their Subjects, and what aſſurance doth it give, that they will not be backward to redreſs them ſo far as is within their power? Had His *head been a fountain of tears*, (as the Prophet *Jeremy* upon occaſion wiſhes his own,) I doubt not but he had poured it forth when he came near to *Cripplegate*, with reſolution to do all a King could do to put out thoſe flames: May we alwayes ſee a bleſſed contention betwixt our King and his People, Which ſhall moſt reſent and bewail each others ſufferings; Which ſhall moſt promote and rejoyce in each others happineſs!

MEDITATION XLIII.

Of meer Worldlings, who loſt their All by this Fire.

THis it is for men to venture all they have and hope-for, in one bottom; and that unſound and apt to leak: Some lay up no treaſures for themſelves any where but upon earth; and upon earth there is no ſafe place to lay up treaſures in: but ſome are more hazardous than others, (as namely, Houſe, ſubject to the common caſualty of fire;) and yet, ſome, who have contented themſelves with

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a portion in this World only, have laid up all there. So juſt is it with God to let them be fooliſh, even in relation to Time, that would not be wiſe for Eternity: weak, even as to this World, that would not be wiſe for the next. The Prodigal, that deſired to make ſure of his Patrimony, by having all in hand, preſently ſpent it, and was reduced to husks: When he ſaw his error, ſurely he became ſenſible, that leſs in poſſeſſion, and more in reverſion would have done better. Were there not ſome, who, when they would bleſs themſelves, (under a pretence of bleſſing God,) had nothing elſe to ſay, neither cared for any thing elſe, but this, *Bleſſed be God! for I am rich*: But, in how ſmall a time are they become poor as *Job*! (as our Proverb is.)

Had they not fair Warning? Did not the Scripture charge them *Not to truſt in uncertain riches?* Did it not tell them, *That Riches had wings, and would fly away?* Alaſs! What will ſuch People do? Whither will they turn themſelves? Intereſt in Heaven they never had any; and, intereſt on Earth they have none left: They are in ſuch like caſe as *Saul* was, when he ſaid, *The Philiſtims were come up againſt him, and God was departed*: Heaven and earth frowns upon them both at once. Had you been in that caſe, that *Chriſt* would have had the Young man in the *Goſpel* to have put himſelf into, when he counſelled him, *To ſell all that he had, and give it to the poor*; telling him, that if he would do ſo, *He ſhould have treaſures in Heaven*; you had not been the hundredth part ſo miſerable; Yea, happy had you been, as to the main. But now, all ſorts of men conclude you in a wofull caſe; Good men do ſo, becauſe you neither had nor have any thing but this Worlds goods: Bad men, yea the worſt of

men, becauſe you have now loſt what you had. But, miſtake me not, as if I were urging People in that caſe to deſpair. God forbid; I am ſo far from that, that I queſtion not but even they may be happier than ever they were heretofore, if the fault be not their own: for, whereas before they had intereſt in the World, but none in God; hereafter, may they have intereſt in God, which is far better, though perchance they may have little or none in the World. *Chriſt* told the Church of *Laodicea* in a ſpiritual ſenſe, *That ſhe was miſerable, and poor, and naked*; ſo are theſe men in both ſenſes, *viz.* Spiritual and Temporal: but, let them take that Counſel which *Chriſt* there gives, and all will be well, *viz. Buy of Chriſt gold tried in the fire, raiment*, &c. All your loſſes may be reckoned *as droſs and dung in compariſon of* your gains, if you ſhall gain this by your loſſes, *viz.* To win *Chriſt*, and to be found in him. Say now, whether you your ſelves were not the fools, and they whom you counted fools the truly wiſe, whoſe care it was to lay up for themſelves *Treaſures in heaven, where moth eates not, ruſt corrupts not, thieves ſteal not*; and, let me add, where fire cannot break in and conſume.

MEDITATION XLIV.

Upon that Forbearance which it becometh Citizens to uſe one towards another ſince the Fire.

NOw the Fire hath arreſted ſo many honeſt Citizens, and made ſuch woful diſtreſs upon them, what pity is it, that over-haſty Creditors ſhould clap in their Actions upon them thick and threefold; as if ſeeing them ſtoop, they were reſolved

ſolved to break them; or, thinking them fallen for the preſent, they would never ſuffer them to riſe more. If you think them well able to pay you preſently, and know yourſelves unable to be without your moneys any longer, that is another matter; or if you have reaſon to think they will not be honeſt, unleſs you make them ſo by a ſurpriſe, and take them at an advantage, ſuch things may plead for you: but ſuch as have to do with men that are not able to pay their debts when they will, but willing to pay them when they are able, and who in caſe they were forborn a while, might be as well able as willing to ſatisfie every man; I ſay, where that is the caſe, to break mens backs with over-haſtineſs at ſuch a time as this, to give them no reſpite, that they may recover their wind after the late calamity hath run them out of breath, is unchriſtian and more than heatheniſh unmercifulneſs. Will you needleſly add affliction to the afflicted? Will you come like waves one in the neck of another upon thoſe that are almoſt ſunk already? thoſe that daſht upon *Scylla* but a little before, will you throw them upon *Charybdis*? whereas, if they had opportunity to make their Voyage, and might come ſafe to harbour, ſuch might be their ſucceſs, that you would be no loſers by them. Men can part with ſeveral Pints of blood ſucceſſively and by degrees, whereas, if you ſhould take ſo much from them all at once, they would be ready to faint and dye away. If the fire hath really undone men, do not you undo them yet more; If that have taken away all their Eſtates, do not you ſeize their Bodies; as if it were not miſery enough for men to have nothing to live upon, unleſs they alſo lie and languiſh in a Priſon. Do no hurt to others whereby you can do

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no good to yourſelves. Go not to work as if you would conſtrain them to be honeſt, that you believe will be honeſt without conſtraint (otherwiſe called reſtraint in this caſe). As for thoſe debtors of yours that make conſcience to do as they would be done by, (and I ſhall plead for none but ſuch), though at preſent they cannot, *Have* but *patience with them and they will pay you all*: that is, all they owe; at leaſtwiſe, all they can, or ſhall be able to pay, and that is all that you can reaſonably demand or expect.

MEDITATION XLV.

Upon any that are ſaid or ſuppoſed to have rejoyced at the coming and conſequences of this Fire.

WHo are they that did or do rejoyce at the burning of *London?* Some ſuch Monſters there are ſaid to be, and none more likely to be in that number, than they that have given it the name of *Babel* or *Babylon*, from whom we can expect no other than acclamations of Joy, ſaying, *Babylon is fallen*. It may be, they or ſome of them, can boaſt of one thing more (and pity it is but if they can they ſhould) *viz.* that they did help to bring down that which they call *Babylon*. If ſo, ſpeak out and be canonized for what you have done; but, whether you will or no, time will either condemn or abſolve you. As for ſome of that Religion, I do in my thoughts acquit them preſently, from either contributing to the deſtruction of *London*, or rejoycing in it now it is done, as believing the ſweetneſs of their temper, and the morality of ſome of their principles to be ſuch, as would not

ſuffer

suffer them to do either, and God forbid that they should suffer so much as by the mistrusts and jealousies of people concerning any such matter: But others of them again (the prodigious actings of men of the same perswasion in former times, the greatness of their own malice, and the desperateness of their principles considered) I dare not answer for, but shall leave it to those honourable persons wich examined all those matters, to clear and vindicate them, if they have found cause so to do. Should I hear any speak with joy of the burning of *London*, or otherwise express themselves to be glad of it, If I should judge themselves to have had a hand in it (and if I should judge amiss) they themselves would be greatly accessary to my uncharitableness.

Whosoever they be, that think the destruction of *London* to be a ground of Joy, let them ring Bells and make Bonefires professedly upon that account, that the world may know them to be such Monsters as indeed they are. I think at present but of three persons, to whom I may fitly compare such men and women: the one is, that infamous execrable *Bonner*; such a feaster upon cruelty, that History tells us, He would not eat his dinner, till tidings were brought him that certain Martyrs were burnt (as if that had been the onely sawce that could make him relish his meat): the other is, that incarnate Devil *Nero*, who set *Rome* on fire, who was reckoned the Enemy of all mankind; who wisht, that whilst he lived Heaven and Earth might be turned into a Chaos, and whom one fitly called Πήλον αἵματι μεμιγμένον, *A mixture of clay and blood*: And lastly, to the Father of that prodigious *Nero*, and of all such as he, whose name is in the Hebrew Tongue,

Tongue, *Abaddon*, and in the Greek *Apollyon*, Rev. 9. 11. that is in Engliſh, *The Deſtroyer*. If the things you rejoyce at be the laying waſt ſo noble a place, the impoveriſhing and undoing ſo many hundreds of honeſt families, the demoliſhing of the ſtrongeſt Fort that *England* had for the defence of true Religion, and whatever elſe was and ought to have been dear to it; if any or all of theſe were and are the ground of your Joy, ſurely the Compariſons I have made are not too ſevere. Nay, let me tell you further, in the words of Scripture, *Pſalm* 37. 13. *The Lord ſhall laugh at you, for he ſeeth your day is coming*: and, as it is in *Prov.* 1. 26. *God will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh: When your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction as a whirlwind; when diſtreſſe and anguiſh cometh upon you.* I love not to imprecate, but may probably enough predict concerning you, as the Prophet *Jeremy*, concerning the Enemies of the Jews, *Lam.* 1. 21, 22. of whom he thus ſpeaks, *All mine enemies have heard of my trouble, they are glad: Thou wilt bring the day that thou haſt called, and they ſhall be like unto me*: He adds, *Let all their wickedneſs come before thee, and do unto them as thou haſt done unto me.*

I am not without hope that the malicious, and inhumane Inſulters over *London*'s downfal may greatly contribute (though quite beſides their intention and much againſt their wills) towards the rebuilding and reflouriſhing of that once-renowned City, neither have I built that hope upon any other than a Scriptural foundation, namely, thoſe words of *Solomon*, Prov. 24. 18. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thy heart be glad, when he ſtumbleth, Leſt the Lord ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him, and he turn away his wrath from him.* *MED.*

MEDITATION XLVI.

Of the burning of Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *compared with the burning of* London.

AS for the burning of *Sodom*, and the cities round about it, all but *Zoar*, it muſt be confeſſed that in ſeveral reſpects it did tranſcend that of *London*. For, firſt of all we read in *Gen.* 19. 24. *That the Lord did rain upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimſtone, and fire from the Lord out of heaven.* Thoſe places were deſtroyed by a meer miracle (which was no ſmall aggravation of the judgement, as it is of mercy when men are ſaved by miracle) but ſo was not *London* conceived to have been. Nextly, the fire upon *Sodom* (and the three other Cities conſumed with it) deſtroyed not only a major part of thoſe Cities but the whole. But the Beeſom of deſtruction, which ſwept *London*, did not ſweep ſo clean but God hath left ſome ſmall remnant of City, that it might not be like *Sodom*, and like *Gomorrah*, *Iſai.* 1. 9. Thirdly, the fire upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* did conſume, not only places, but perſons; not only four Cities, but the greateſt part of their inhabitants, *Gen.* 19. 25. But to the praiſe of diſtinguiſhing-mercy be it ſpoken, the inhabitants of *London* were generally ſnatcht as fire-brands out of the fire, and ſo was part of their ſubſtance. Fourthly, *Sodom and Gomorrah are ſaid to ſuffer the vengeance of eternal fire*, Jude 7. Which expreſſion, ſo far as it is refer'd to the places themſelves, doth ſignifie that they were irrecoverably deſtroyed by fire, ſo as that they ſhall eternally lie waſt. But concerning *London*, we hope and have rea-

reaſon to hope better things, and that ſhe may ſay to her inſulting enemies, *Rejoyce not over me; For though I fall, yet ſhall I riſe again*, &c. Fifthly,

As if one deſtruction had been too little (and that by fire too) *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, were deſtroyed by water alſo; that whole Countrey being turned into a ſtanding ſtinking Lake, *which at this day is called the Dead Sea*, and in the Scripture *the ſalt-ſea*, *Gen.* 14. 3. Though formerly it was *even as the garden of God, or as the land of Egypt for fruitfulneſs*, Gen. 14. 10. The Salt-ſea it is ſuppoſed to be called from the Sulphurous combuſtions, firſt occaſioning it: and the Dead-ſea, becauſe the Charnel-houſe of ſo many dead Carcaſſes, then deſtroyed therein, or becauſe it is quickned by no viſible motion, or becauſe it kills all creatures that come into it. Several marks of God's curſe it retains to this day. Though it be a Sea, yet neither can fiſhes live in it, nor ſhips ſail in it, neither hath it intercourſe with any other ſeas or communion with the Ocean, leſt it ſhould infect other waters with its malignity, neither doth any healthful thing grow thereon; God having blaſted it (as it were) as Chriſt did the barren fig-tree. *Solinus* calls it a Melancholy Bay, which the black-ſoil thereof, being alſo turned into aſhes, witneſſeth to have been blaſted from heaven. I read of nothing that appeareth good in & about *Sodom* ſince its deſtruction, but a certain Apple, and that doth but appear ſo neither; for though it appear fair to the eye, yet within the rind of it, is nothing but an Ember-like Soot, which being lightly preſſed evaporates into ſmoak, and becomes duſt. Laſtly, I might adde that God would not permit *Lot* and his wife, to teſtifie their reſpects and com-

compaſſion towards *Sodom*, when the ſmoak thereof went up like a furnace, by caſting ſo much as one look back upon it; which *Lot's* wife preſuming to do became a pillar of Salt, *Geneſis* 19. 26. In all theſe reſpects was the deſtruction of *Sodom* greater, than that of *London*; Yet, Who is able to ſay, Their ſins were greater, all things conſidered? *London* had wherewithal to make its ſins more out of meaſure ſinful than were thoſe of the *Sodomites*: *It may be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah at the day of Judgment, than for* ſome *Londoners*, (though the Judgement upon *London* at the preſent be leſs intolerable of the two,) *Mat.* 10. 15. *For, if the mighty works which have been done in London, had been done in Sodom*, poſſibly it had remained to this day, *Matt.* 11. 23.

If any ſhould ſay, It is but juſt that the place where *Sodom* ſtood, ſhould be turned into a *ſtanding-Lake*, in memorial of the great Idleneſs of the Inhabitants: That it ſhould be turned into a *Dead-Sea*; ſo called, from its killing all creatures that come near it, in remembrance, how the *Sodomites* did, or would have corrupted all perſons that came near them, even the Angels themſelves that were *Lots* gueſts: That the place where thoſe Cities ſtood, ſhould have no communion with any other place, ſhould be an exception from that rule, that, *All Rivers run into the Sea*, viz. by way of puniſhment for that unlawful communion which they had wont to have one with another, changing the natural uſe to that which is againſt nature; or that it ſhould be a *Dead-Sea*, becauſe the Inhabitants living in pleaſures, *were dead whilſt they live*; as is ſaid of Widows that ſo live: or, that no good thing ſhould

grow

grow there, becauſe ſo many good creatures of God had wont to be abuſed by them, one of whoſe ſins was fulneſs of bread meaning Luxury; That the fair Apple which grows there having nothing within it but Soot and aſhes, was an emblem and ſignification of their being burnt to aſhes for luſting after Beauty. I ſay, if any will ſo diſcant upon the deſtruction of *Sodom*, how eaſie were it to aſſign as many and as ſtrong Reaſons, why God might have dealt by *London* as he dealt with *Sodom*? When *Londoners* are ready to ſay, No miſery like theirs, let them think of *Sodom*, and the Inhabitants thereof; betwixt whom and themſelves, not their own merits, but Gods great mercy, hath made a very wide difference.

MEDITATION XLVII.

Of the burning of Troy *and the circumſtances thereof, compared with that of* London.

TIme was, when that place which was ſince called *London*, went by the name of new-*Troy*, and as it ſometimes bore the ſame name, ſo they both came to the ſame end, *viz.* by fire. Old *Troy* was fired not accidentally, but wilfully and by Enemies; and ſo ſome think was New-*Troy*, otherwiſe called *London*. Admit the ſtory of *Troy* be partly fictitious (as things related by Poets are ſuſpected to be) yet give me leave to moralize it as followeth: Is is reported, that *Priamus* giving leave to his Son *Paris*, to raviſh *Helena*, Wife to *Menelaus* King of *Sparta*, was that which forced the Greeks, who burnt *Troy*, to renew their ancient quarrel againſt it. I think, there have been few Tragedies acted

acted in the world, but the luſt of the fleſh hath born a ſhare in, and been one great occaſion of them. I cannot ſay, it was that which did provoke men to burn *London*, if it were done by wilfull inſtruments; but I doubt not, but that was one of the ſins which did provoke God to ſuffer that goodly City to be burnt. Was not *Paris* his treacherous ſlaying of *Achilles*, who was in treaty of Marriage with his ſiſter *Polyxena*, another incentive to the *Grecians* to deſtroy *Troy*? The unrighteous ſhedding of blood is a ſin, that will as eaſily kindle a fire as moſt that can be mentioned. The *Greeks* (as is ſaid) had it revealed to them, that unleſs they could do three things, *Troy* could never be deſtroyed: One was, they muſt get the *Palladium*, or image of *Pallas* out of the City, (which, *Virgil* ſaith, they did by means of *Ulyſſes*). *Pallas* was counted the Goddeſs of wiſdom. Had not the *Palladium* been taken away, for the time; or had thoſe that were concern'd been ſo wiſe at firſt, as they were at laſt, *London* had ſcarcely been burnt to the ground in ſpight of all the treachery that was ſuſpected, or could have been uſed. Another thing was, If they would deſtroy *Troy*, they muſt provide a great Wodden-horſe, which accordingly they did, putting ſome of their choiſeſt men into the belly of it, which pretending to dedicate to *Minerva*, they left before the City, having made it higher than the gates, hoping, as it proved, that the *Trojans* would pull down part of the wall, to take it in, whilſt they had withdrawn themſelves to the Iſland *Tenedos*. The *Trojans* brake down the wall, took in the horſe, placed it in the Caſtle: but in the night *Sinon* who was one of thoſe *Grecians*, that were in the Horſe's belly, giving notice by fire, the *Greeks*

came from *Tenedos*; who finding the *Trojans* had drunk themſelves faſt aſleep, ſackt the City, and burnt it. Thus *Troy* periſhed, partly by the Credulity, Security, Weakneſs, and Intemperance of it's Inhabitants, in a little time after it had for ten years together, withſtood the fruitleſs attempts of its adverſaries. Was there not ſome ſuch thing went to the deſtruction of *London?* Were there not a ſort of men within that City (as is vehemently ſuſpected) who might not unfitly be compared to the *Greeks* that were hid in the Belly of the forementioned Wodden-horſe, people of a concealed Religion, (and therefore I call them hid); and amongſt the reſt was there not one *Sinon*, as I may call him, becauſe he was the firſt that kindled the fire (witneſs his own confeſsion)? Had not the Gates of *London* been ſet too wide open for ſuch treacherous *Greeks* to enter in, poſsibly that famous City had been ſtanding to this very day. But what was a Proverb concerning *Trojans*, *Sero ſapiunt Phryges*, The *Trojans* uſe to be wiſe when it is too late, was too applicable to our ſelves. We begin to wiſh the gates of *London* had been ſhut againſt ſuch dangerous Perſons, when alaſs! in ſome places it hath no Gates to ſhut. It is likely, the Gentlemen that lay Couchant before, in the Belly of the Woodden-horſe, are now not without greater hopes than ever that they ſhall get up and ride. *But he that ſits in heaven can make* the ſecond of *September* produce them as little good, as did their infamous fifth of *November*. But why was it that *London* was deſtroyed by the ſame means as was old *Troy*? Will any ſay that the old Proverb, that ſuch a one is a truſty *Trojan*, was as applicable to the new *Trojans*, as to the old? I do not think that was the reaſon.

For

For though there might be ſome faithleſs men in *London* (as there are in all places;) yet I doubt not, but *Londoners* (take one with another) might and may ſafely be truſted, as far as any ſort of men; and have as much Faith and Conſcience amongſt them as is elſewhere to be found. But, that God who found ſin enough in *Job* to juſtifie all that he did againſt him, all the evil he brought upon him, could not but have a ſufficient controverſie with *London*; which, abſolutely conſidered, was bad enough; though, if compared with other places and People, it was certainly one of the beſt.

MEDITATION XLVIII.

Upon the Burning of Jeruſalem, *compared with the Burning of* London.

MAny Prodigies there were, as *Joſephus* tells us, that went before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by *Fire*, namely, that a great Gate of the Temple, which twenty men could hardly pull open, opened of its own accord; and, that an *Oxe* brought forth a *Lamb* in the Temple; with ſeveral others, which I forbear to mention: Theſe were dark Texts for men to expound, yet, ſome did venture to give the ſenſe and meaning of them, as if each of them had been a token for good, whereas the event did manifeſt the quite contrary. So was the deſtruction of *London* uſhered in with ſeveral Prodigies, Blazing-Stars, and others, which did precede it at no ſuch diſtance of time, but that it was probable enough they might refer to the Fire, as well as to the foregoing-Peſtilence. Neither may we doubt, but there were ſome who did put a

good conſtruction upon thoſe ill-Signes, as if they had been fore-runners of the good things, which they themſelves expected in the year -66; though as to their enemies they might have an ill-aſpect, and ominous ſignification: Thus far ſome involved themſelves in the ſame practiſe with the *Jews* of old, and God hath involved them in the ſame kind of calamity. It is dangerous doing as *Jews*, leſt we ſuffer as they.

But, beſides Prodigies, there were alſo ſundry Propheſies, which did precede the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. *Chriſt* fore-told it at large, as is reported by ſeveral *Evangeliſts*, with the ſeveral antecedents and concomitants of it; how, *That the Sun ſhould be darkned, and the Moon not give her light*, Matt. 24.29. There were alſo humane Propheſies concerning it, as particularly by that Man, who ran thorough the Streets of *Jeruſalem*, and cried *Woe to it* ſeveral dayes together; which, conſidering what *Chriſt* himſelf had ſaid, was at no hand to be ſlighted. We find no Text in Scripture Propheſying the burning of *London*, and in ſuch a year; but I have heard that ſome did confidently aſſert, before any thing of the Fire did happen, that *London* would be burnt in the year -66: as others had done, that it would be viſited with a great Plague in -65: VVhich things coming to paſs accordingly, may reaſonably incline us to believe, that God, (though by what way and means we know not,) had imparted the fore-knowledg of that Event to ſuch as did peremptorily Propheſie concerning it: For, though it be too much credulouſneſs to believe a Human Propheſie before it be fulfilled; yet to diſ-believe, that it

Mat. 24. *Mark* 13. *Luk.* 21.5. *Luk.* 19.44.

it was a real Propheſie, when it is fulfilled, is on the other hand too much moroſeneſs and incredulity: It is not unuſual with God to reveal to one or other thoſe great and ſtrange things which he is about to do in the VVorld; though becauſe there are many falſe pretenders to Revelations, we ought to ſuſpend our belief of ſuch things delivered to us by others, till the event do atteſt them.

The burning of *Jeruſalem*, at leaſtwiſe of the Temple, is ſaid to have been begun by one of *Veſpatian*'s Souldiers, contrary to his known will and pleaſure; but, when it was once begun, there were many more that did help it forward, with an eye to gain and plunder. So the burning of *London* ſeems to have taken its firſt riſe from one hand, *viz.* His that ſuffered for it; but is vehemently preſumed to have been carried on by many more of the ſame ſtamp: Before *Jeruſalem* was ſet on fire, it had indured a cloſe Siege, and a terrible Fire, of which thouſands, yea millions of People died. No Siege or Famine, (bleſſed be God!) but a very terrible Plague is well known to have preceded the burning of *London*. One judgment going off without its deſigned effect, doth not exempt men from, but tranſmit them to another; as, where one of *Pharaoh*'s Plagues ended, another began, he ſtill *refuſing to let* Iſrael *go*. Some part of *Jeruſalem* was left ſtanding, *viz.* the Weſt-end of the Wall, and three Towers for their ſtrength and beauty, preſerved by the command of *Titus*, to bear teſtimony of the ſtatelineſs of the City to poſterity. So, by the Providence of God, was, and is a tenth part of *London*, or thereabouts, preſerved to this day, as it were, in memorial of what *London* was. It muſt needs be confeſſed, that the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*

ruſalem was far greater than that of *London*, all things conſidered; becauſe millions of *Jews* were put to the ſword, beſides ſeveral other cruelties that were inflicted upon others of them; one whereof was, that upon a miſtruſt that ſome of them had ſwallowed gold, two thouſand of them were ript up by the Souldiers hoping to have rob'd thoſe Mines, which made them Goldfinders, but not in ſuch a ſenſe as they expected to have been. Theſe were aggravations of miſery, which Londoners were exempted from (thanks to His infinite goodneſs, who in judgement was pleaſed to remember mercy). But it is not ſo much the diſparity as the parallel betwixt the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* and of *London*, that I aim to ſpeak of; whereof I ſhall adde two inſtances: one is this, *Jeruſalem*, and *London*, were both fired in the ſame moneth, *viz. September*; which moneth hiſtory informs us to have been fatal to many other Cities, and, as I take it, to *Jeruſalem*, more then once. Laſtly, *Jeruſalem* was ſet on fire, by *Romans*: and, as is ſtrongly ſuſpected, By *Romaniſts* too was *London* burnt. If it were otherwiſe, may their Innocency appear, and may thoſe worthy *Patriots*, who had the matter under examination, acquit them before all the world.

MEDITATION XLIX.

Upon People's taking the firſt and greateſt care to ſave thoſe things from the Fire, which they did moſt value.

WHo knows not, that the method which men uſed in removing, was, firſt to ſend away their VVifes and Children, (as being their greateſt treaſure)

treasure); next to them, their Writings of consequence, such as Books of accompt, Bills, Bonds, and others of great moment; and after them, their first and greatest care was, to secure their Jewels (such as had any), their Cash, their Plate, and such like precious things. Next to them, their care was for their Shop-goods, and first for those that were of greatest price. In a word, what things men did most value, those they did labour in the first place to secure, deferring the removal of their lumber to the very last, so that for want of time much of that was consumed. So *Jacob*, prizing *Rachel* and her Children above the rest of his family, took the greatest care to secure them, by putting them in the rear of his Company, when he went out to meet his Brother *Esau*, coming against him in a hostile way; *but the handmaids and their Children he put in the front* (and, as it were, in the forlorn-hope) exposing them to most danger, for whom he had least love and respect, *Gen.* 33. 2. Alas! that men should use a worse method in reference to spiritual things, than they naturally fall into in relation to temporals. For how ordinary is it with men, in matters of Religion, to commit ὑστερον πρωτερον, which our English Proverb doth phrase, *Setting the Cart before the Horse*, or, setting that first which should be last? How many take care to save the lumber of Religion, as I may call it, whilst, mean time, that better part of it which is like Plate and Jewels, is in danger to be lost? So did those *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who took great care to pay *tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and omitted the weightier matters of the Law*, viz. *Judgment, Mercy*, and *Faith*, *Mat.* 23. 23. There are some Truths unspeakably greater, and of more conse-

quence, than others. Thoſe ſhould moſt of all be contended for.

There are ſome enemies to our Religion, which would not onely build with hay and ſtubble, but even lay another Foundation beſides that which is laid, *viz.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, though other Foundation, that will bear, can no man lay, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11. Such ſhould moſt of all be contended againſt. For, others are but diſparately oppoſite to us, as Green to Yellow, and other intermediate colours are to White; but ſuch, are as quite contrary to us, as Black can be to White. Some Duties there are, the performance whereof are, as it were, the very Pillars of a Church, which it cannot ſtand without. Others again, are for their nature more diſputable, for their uſe more indifferent and leſſe neceſſary. God forbid, but the firſt of theſe ſhould alwayes take place of the laſt, and that we may more regard thoſe things of which Chriſt ſaith, *Theſe things ought you to have done*; and then thoſe other, of which he ſpeaketh more diminutively, ſaying, *And the other you ſhould not have left undone.*

There are certain ſins, which, *Sampſon*-like, do take hold upon the Pillars of the Houſe, I mean, Church and State, and threaten to pull it down. How prepoſterous would it be to puniſh peccadillo's with Scorpions, and let ſuch crimes of the firſt magnitude ſcarce be puniſhed with Rods? What men did in relation to the Fire, may ever teach them, to mind thoſe things in the firſt place, which are of greateſt conſequence. If men had Iron-ware and Gun-powder in the ſame Shop, did they not ſtrive to remove their Gun-powder before their Iron, becauſe that would do moſt hurt. It

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is the Apoſtle's rule, that all things ſhould be done decently and in order. To begin with thoſe things which are moſt neceſſary, and then proceed gradually to thoſe which are of leſs conſequence, is one of the moſt neceſſary pieces of Order that can be obſerved. It is a good rule, that we ſhould firſt do thoſe things that muſt be done, and afterwards thoſe that may be done. *Joſeph* was overſeen in preſenting *Ephraim* to his Father's left hand, and *Manaſſeh* to his right; and *Jacob* obſerving it, laid his right hand upon *Ephraim*, and his left upon *Manaſſeh*, *Gen.* 48. 14. In like manner, there is frequent cauſe for us to croſs our hands, and place our right where we are moved to place our left; nothing being more incident to us, than to mind thoſe things in the laſt, which we ought to regard in the firſt place. By as good reaſon as men ſecured their Wives and Children before their goods, their Gold and Silver before their lumber, ought men, who know their ſouls to be more worth than all other things, firſt of all to ſecure them from that worm that never dyes, from that fire that never will go out.

MEDITATION L.

Upon ſome who, ſoon after the Fire, could hardly tell whereabouts their own houſes did ſtand.

SO it was, that ſome who attempted to viſit the Ruines and Reliques of thoſe Houſes in which they dwelt, (not above a week before,) though they found the Street in which they ſtood, yet had much ado to be certain which was the ground they ſtood upon. He that ſhould have told them but one

one day before the Fire began, that within five or ſix dayes, they being in *London*, and in the ſame Street where their dwelling was, ſhould not be able to find the way to their own Houſes, (where they had lived, it may be, twenty years and upwards,) would have been lookt upon as mad, or replied to in ſome ſuch language as this; What ſhould aile us? Shall we be out of our wits within that time? or, Shall we be ſtruck with blindneſs as the *Sodomites* were, that ſought for *Lots* door? or, if ſo, we think we could find our own Houſes blindfold, or in the darkeſt night, at ſo ſmall a diſtance: or, Shall *London* be changed as much as *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*? which were fair Cities, but are now a filthy Lake: Or how, and by what means ſhould it be ſo much altered? He did not more expreſs his admiration and disbelief of what was foretold in another caſe, who ſaid, *If God would make Windows in Heaven, how could this be?* than moſt men would have expreſſed theirs as to this: Yet do we ſee the thing, which could enter into no mans heart to conceive, till he ſaw it is come to paſs. Methinks it is ſad to hear men, that knew *London* well enough before, as they walk along the Ruins, asking at every turn, Which is the way to ſuch a place? and, What ſtreet is this? and, What Street is that? But yet more ſad, to think of men, that have ſought their own Houſes, not far from the place where they had wont to ſtand, and could not eaſily find them. There is a phraſe in Scripture, of *Mens places knowing them no more*: but, in this caſe that phraſe was inverſed, *viz. Men, for the time, knew their places no more.* Oh ſtupendious Judgment! I ſee it is eaſie for God to do ſuch things as are hardly poſſible for men to believe, till they ſee them done. So true is it, that the

the wayes of God are above our wayes, and his thoughts above our thoughts, as much as the Heavens are above the Earth. How good is it then to be armed againſt all ſorts of evil, not only ſuch as are likely and probable, but even thoſe which are no more than poſſible? and, What evil is there which he cannot inflict, to whom all things are poſſible? For ought I ſee, no man is ſecured againſt any kind of Judgment, but he, that is ſecured againſt all (in ſome ſenſe,) by vertue of that promiſe, Prov. 12. 21. *No evil ſhall happen to the juſt*: with others of the ſame import. Nothing could be more improbable, than that ſo many Calamities of different kinds ſhould befall *Job*, not ſucceſſively, but at one and the ſame time, *viz.* The *Sabæans* taking away his Cattel, and killing his ſervants, *Job* 1. 14. And, that whileſt the firſt Meſſenger was yet ſpeaking, another ſhould come, and tell him, that *fire, falling from Heaven, had burnt up his ſheep and his ſervants*; and, that before the words were out of his mouth, another ſhould come and inform him, *That the Caldeans had carried away his Camels, and ſlain others of his ſervants*; and, that before he had made an end of his ſtory, another ſhould come and tell him, *That a great Wind had killed his Sons and Daughters, by throwing down the houſe upon them where they were eating and drinking together*; and that only one perſon ſhould eſcape each of theſe dangers; being reſerved, as it were, on purpoſe to bring him the tidings of it: Such a conſpiracy of Providences (as I may call it) to ſtrip a man of all his Comforts at once, could ſcarce have been imagined, till the event did declare it: Unexpected and unimaginable miſeries are not much more rare than unexpected and unlookt-for Mercies.

Upon

Upon this occaſion, I cannot but think of three other ſorts of houſes (as we may term them) which men have or may ſeek for and not be able to find. Firſt, our bodies they are the Houſes or Tabernacles in which our ſouls dwell, (as he ſaid, *Anima Galbæ male habitat*, *Galba's* ſoul dwelt in an ill-body) when thoſe houſes ſhall be crumbled away to duſt, or devoured of worms, who will be able to find them or to ſay, Which were they? The Graves of men they are the Houſes or Receptacles of their dead bodies, *Job* 17. 13. *If I wait, the grave is my houſe, and the grave is called the houſe appointed for all living Job* 30. 23. How many ſuch houſes as thoſe could not be found, if they ſhould never ſo carefully be ſought for? How ordinarily are the dead turned out of poſſeſſion, and the living come in their room? that is; Charnel-houſes have been turned into dwelling-houſes, and many more ſuch inſtances are like to be: ſo that it hath and will become impoſſible, not only to know the bodies of dead men again, but their very graves. And the then Earth it's ſelf, that is as it were the houſe of all graves, the great *Golgotha*, or *place of ſkulls*: Now when that time ſhall come which is ſpoken of, 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. in which *the earth and all the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up*, that great Houſe of houſes and graves, if it be ſought for, will be found no more.

MEDITATION LI.

On the Statue of Sir Thomas Greſham *left ſtanding at the* Old-Exchange.

HOw great and particular a reſpect did the Fire ſhew to the Effigies of that worthy Knight, the

the honurable Founder of that which was the *Royal-Exchange*, and doner of *Greſham-Colledge*, (which, for preſent, ſucceeds in the room of it;) I ſay, how great a reſpect, by the appointment of Divine Providence, (without which not a hair falleth from our heads) did that Fire ſhew to his Effigies in particular, which it left ſtanding and undefaced, whilſt mean time the Statues of all the Kings and Queens of *England* ſince the Conqueſt, were demoliſhed and thrown down by it. No man could have anſwered it, to have put more honour upon a fellow-Subject, than upon his lawful Prince, much leſſe upon one Subject than upon many that had ſwayed the Scepter within his native Soil (for certainly there is an honour which Kings, as Kings, may challenge from their own people, greater than is due to any of their Subjects): but God, who is the King of Kings, may do what he pleaſe, He may *pull down the mighty from their ſeats, and exalt them of low degree*, as it is, *Luke* 1. 52. Men muſt have regard to political claimes and rights, in diſpenſing their reſpects, and give honour to whom honour is due upon that account: but moral conſiderations are thoſe which the Great God takes notice of, who is otherwiſe *no reſpecter of perſons*, yet hath promiſed to *honour thoſe that honour him*, and is alwayes obſervant, though not of mens ſecular dignities, yet of their real worth and deſerts. Now it muſt needs be confeſſed, that no perſon upon earth had deſerved ſo well of the *Royal-Exchange*, as that worſhipful Knight had done, who both made and maintained it. Indeed it was called the *Burſe* or *Purſe* of the Kings and Queens of *England*, and theirs it was by Sovereignty and ſuperintendency, by confirmation and countenance,

but

but it was only his by coſt and charge, by creation and donation. They allowed it for an *Exchange*, and protected it as ſuch, but he only built and upheld it, for that uſe and purpoſe. They were, as I may ſay, the God-fathers to that Noble Structure, which put their own names upon it; but he the Father which gave Being to it. Now, which of thoſe two have moſt intereſt in a Child, is eaſy to judge; and that of the Poet may determine; *Et quæ non fecimus ipſi, Haud ea noſtro voco*, Things are principally theirs who made them. Yet this muſt be acknowledged, though he made it an Edifice, yet they made it an *Exchange*, by their Royal Sanction and deſignation: but, to do the former, *Hic labor, hoc opus erat.* And is all that coſt and labour loſt, which that generous Knight did beſtow upon that noble Foundation? Surely no; For, beſides the great ſervice which that well-intended Structure did to the Nation for a hundred years together, ſuch, and ſo great was the fragrancy of that precious ointment, which by him was poured out upon the head of *London* and of it's Inhabitants, that the ſavour thereof will never be out of their noſtrils; nor ſhall they need the help of a ſtanding *Exchange*, to remember ſo worthy a Founder by. Three ſignal marks of honour did the late deſolating fire (or rather God, who is ſaid to divide the flames of fire (which may be meant of diſtributing them as he pleaſeth) put upon that renowned Benefactor. One was that I have been writing of, *viz.* the forbearance of his Effigies, and of his alone (as if the relation of a Founder and noble Benefactor, had put a peculiar ſacredneſs into it.) You might have ſeen him (his Statue I mean) after the Fire ſafe and ſound, as *Noah* was after the flood,

flood, the one having eſcaped a Deluge of Fire (if I may ſo call it) as the other did a deluge of Water: *Noah* was preſerved by the viſible and probable means of an Ark, in which himſelf and his family were imbarqued; but, all the Ark, or means of preſervation which this worthy Knight had, was only the immediate Providence of God, which ſeemed to intend a particular reſpect, for and towards ſo great a Benefactor; reſerving him, as we hope, (in Effigie I mean,) to ſee another Exchange, as *Noah* was, (but he indeed in Perſon,) to ſee another World, after the deſtruction of the firſt; whom for that reaſon the ancient *Poets* are ſuppoſed to have meant by him, they call *Janus*, with two Faces, for that he had faced two Worlds. Another badg of Honour put upon him was, the preſervation of that other Famous-Building, known by the name of *Greſham-Colledge*, which that Noble Knight had long ſince given to a Publick-Uſe; intimating, that he wiſht no better Succeſſors than the *Muſes* in that Houſe, in which himſelf did ſometimes dwell. A third Honour which befel him at this time was, that his own Dwelling-Houſe (that was) ſhould, for the time being, and till the former can be built again, be made the Royall Exchange, as if no man could provide an Exchange fit to receive our Merchants, but their old Founder Sir *Thomas Greſham*: which thing is no ſmall acceſsion of dignity, to that place, which as a Colledge furniſhed with able Profeſſors, and good Lectures, well indowed, was very Honourable before. Thus was the worthy Knight thrice dubbed (if I may ſo call it) after the firſt time, and that by the fire. Where then is the man that hath an eſtate commenſurate with ſo great an undertaking,

that

that when he conſiders theſe things would not be ambitious, to do as Sir *Thomas Greſham* had done before him; I mean to build an Exchange in Lieu of that which now lieth in aſhes? What better way could he think of, whereby to perpetuate his name to all Poſterity? or wherein could he better ſerve his Native-Countrey? Is there never a rich Batchelor devoted to a ſingle life? Nor yet any Childleſs (and almoſt kindred-leſs) Widower that hath Gold and Silver enough to compaſs ſuch a glorious work as that? thereby he may acquire to himſelf a name, and a memorial in the world better then that of ſons and daughters. How oft do great eſtates (even ſufficient for ſo great an enterprize as I am ſpeaking of) fall into the hands of men that neither know how to uſe them whilſt they live, nor yet how to diſpoſe them when they die, either for their own honour, or for a publick good. Is it not eaſier to find ten men with ſuch eſtates, as Sir *Thomas Greſham* had, than one man with ſo Noble and generous a Spirit? I wiſh ſome men do not bequeath their money to not much better purpoſes, than if they had purchaſed Coals with it to ſend to *New-caſtle*, or thrown it into the Sea, rather then imploy it to ſo good, and charitable a Uſe, as is rebuilding of the Royal Exchange. Brave ambition to leave a name juſtly renowned amongſt men, if it be any thing of a vice, is, in appearance, ſo generous, and ſo like a virtue that ſome low-ſpirited men were never capable of it, nor can ever be made to feel the ſharpeſt Spurrs of Honour, ſo as thereby to be ſtimulated and quickned to Heroical Enterprizes. I am amazed to think that ſome, but ordinary men, have parted with their very lives, only to tell the world they were no Cowards,

Cowards, or to leave a Name for valour behind them (which would be but nine days wonder) when others of better birth, and quality will not part ſo much as with their eſtates to good uſes (no not when they come to die) whereby to inform the world for ever, that they were lovers of their Countrey, as was ſaid of that Centurion; *He hath loved our nation, and built us a Synagogue.*

MEDITATION LII.

Upon the Pillar appointed, and intended to be ſet up in remembrance of the burning of London.

IF *London* its ſelf be not the doleful Monument of its own deſtruction, by always lying in Aſhes (which God forbid it ſhould) it is provided for by Act of Parliament, that after its reſtauration a Pillar either of Braſs or Stone, ſhould be erected in perpetual memory of its late moſt diſmall conflagration. Herein (for ought I know) hath the pious care of this age exceeded all former; For though Hiſtory telleth us, that *London* hath ſeveral times been burnt, yet that any ſuch Memorial was ſet up, whereby to inform and warn all after ages, I cannot call to mind that I ever read. May we uniformly tranſcend the piety of former ages, as well in all other things as we have done in this, then ſhall we not need to doubt, but as our greater ſins have of late years procured us greater judgements, (one in the neck of another) than have formerly been known in ſo quick a ſucceſſion (*viz.* of Sword, Peſtilence, and Fire;) ſo our tranſcen-

dant Reformation will end in greater bleſſings than former ages have been acquainted with.

It is not without ſeveral Patterns and Preſidents in Scripture, that Memorials ſhould be erected, as well of Judgements, as of Mercies; For, not only did *Jacob* ſet up a Pillar of Stone in the place where God talked with him, and faſtened the name of *Bethel* upon it, *Gen.* 35. 14. in remembrance of the great Favour there vouchſafed him; but, God himſelf, to commemorate his great diſpleaſure againſt *Lot*'s Wife, for looking back towards *Sodom* (which ſhe ought not to have done *verſe* 17.) *turned her into a Pillar of Salt*, (which may ſignifie a laſting Pillar, or a hard ſtiff Body of perpetual duration: (in which ſenſe, the Covenant of God is called, *a Covenant of Salt*, that is, of perpetuity,) to ſeaſon after-Ages with the remembrance of his judgment upon her: We read of the *Brazen-Cenſers of Korah and his Company, thoſe ſinners againſt their own ſouls* (as they are called); that they were *made into broad-Plates for a covering of the Altar, to be a memorial to the children of Iſrael, that no ſtranger, that is, not of the ſeed of Aaron come near to offer intenſe before the Lord, that he be not as Korah and his company*, Numb. 1. 16. 39. We read alſo of a great Stone called *Abel*, which word ſignifieth Grief; and that name ſeemeth to have been given it becauſe of the Lamentation which the People made over thoſe *Bethſhemites*, that were ſlain for looking into the Ark, 1 *Sam.* 6. 18. The *Philiſtims* themſelves, when ſmitten by God with *Emerods*, and plagued with *Mice*, are ſaid to have preſented the Lord with certain Monuments of thoſe judgments that were upon them, *viz.* with ſo many *Golden Emerods* (or figures of *Emerods*,) and ſo many *Golden Mice*, as

a Trespass-offering, 1 Sam. 6. 4, 5. *Wherefore ye shall make Images of their Emerods, and of your Mice, which mar the Land; and shall give glory to the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, from off your gods, and from off your Land*: which plainly shows, that even those blind Heathen did look upon the due Commemoration of Judgments, as a thing well-pleasing unto God; and we are assured it is so, by the complaint which God maketh of the *Israelites*, their forgetting the *great things* which God *had done in* Ægypt, *and terrible things by the Red-Sea*, (meaning the drowning of *Pharaoh* and all his Host there, *Psal.* 106. 21.) And the Apostle writing of what had befallen the murmuring *Israelites*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 6. saith, *These things are our examples, that we shou'd not lust after evil things, as they also lusted*; Therefore, remember them we must, or else we can take no warning by them.

He that questioneth the needfulness of erecting a Pillar, or some other Monument, to commemorate the late dreadful Fire, may see his Error, if he do but consider, that *London* (though not such a *London* then, as this was,) hath formerly been burnt several times, (and did once continue in ashes fourscore and five years together;) and yet the generality of men now living in these parts, were so far from considering and awing their hearts with the remembrance of it, that but here and there a man doth so much as know that any such thing was ever done.

De Dinim. Hist. Col. 114. 8. 131. 161. 213. 263.

How vain a thing is it for Papists to bear us in hand, That Orall-Tradition is sufficient to transmit Religion to the World; and is the great thing we are to rely upon; when, but for the Writings of *Historians*, we had all been

ignorant of ſo remarkable a thing, as was the burning of *London* five ſeveral times, *viz. Anno Domini* 798, and *Anno* 801; and again *Anno* 982, and again, *Anno Domini* 1087. and after that in the year 1133, which was little more than five hundred years agoe: Had our *Parliament* had any ſuch confidence in Orall-Tradition, they had never deſigned a Pillar for the memorial of a Fire ſo hard to be forgotten.

How weakly do *Papiſts* Argue, that the Authority of the Scriptures is built upon the Church, and the Church its ſelf Infallible; becauſe it is called, *The Pillar of Truth*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. Whereas Pillars are many times erected for other uſes, than to uphold and under-prop buildings; as the ſeveral Inſtances which I have brought from Scripture, of Pillars, ſet up only as Monuments and Memorials; and, the uſe to which the Pillar I am now treating of, is to be applied, do plainly prove: Such a Pillar is the Church, *viz.* to tranſmit the memory of Religion, or rather that Inſcription, (the Scriptures I mean,) which are the great memorial thereof from one Age to another.

But, Will the intended matter of that Pillar, which is appointed to be either Braſs or Stone, afford us nothing of a profitable Meditation? Methinks it ſhould. What Mettal is there that more reſembleth Fire than doth burniſhed-Braſs? therefore in *Ezek.* 1.7. we read, that the feet of the living Creatures there ſpoken of, did *ſparkle like the colour of burniſhed-Braſs.* It is but fit that the Memorials of things ſhould bear as lively a reſemblance as may be, of thoſe things of which they are intended Memorials: So the *Philiſtims* made choice of Artificial *Mice* and *Emerods*, in remembrance

brance of thoſe that were true and natural: Moreover, if *London* were conſumed by Treachery, no mettal can be more fit to receive the Characters of their moſt Impudent Villany, who (as to that) had ſinned with a Brow of Braſs, and with a Whores Fore-head. Or, if Stone be choſen rather of the two, to make that Pillar of, be it a laſting Emblem of the Hardneſs of their hearts, (harder than the neither Milſtone,) that could burn ſuch a City, and ruin ſo many thouſand Families, both for the preſent, and for many years, if not Ages to come.

Where the Fire began, there, or as near as may be to that place, muſt the Pillar be erected, (if ever there be any ſuch.) If we commemorate the places where our Miſeries began, ſurely the cauſes whence they ſprang, (the meritorious cauſes, or ſins, are thoſe I now intend,) ſhould be thought of much more. If ſuch a Lane burnt *London*, Sin firſt burnt that Lane: *Cauſa cauſa eſt cauſa cauſati*; *Affliction ſprings not out of the duſt*; not but that it may ſpring thence immeditely, (as if the duſt of the Earth ſhould be turned into Lice,) but primarily and originally it ſprings up elſewhere.

As for the Inſcription that ought to be upon that Pillar, (whether of Braſs or Stone,) I muſt leave it to their Piety and Prudence, to whom the Wiſdom of the Parliament hath left it: Only three things I both wiſh and hope concerning it; The firſt is, That it may be very humble, giving God the glory of his righteous Judgements, and taking to our ſelves the ſhame of our great demerits. Secondly, That the Confeſſion which ſhall be there Ingraven, may be as impartial, as the judgement its ſelf was; not charging the guilt for which that

fire came upon a few only, but acknowledging that all have ſinned, as all have been puniſhed. Far be it from any man to ſay, that his ſins did not help to burn *London* that cannot alſo ſay (and who that is know not) that neither he nor any of his either is, or are ever like to be, any thing the worſe for that dreadful fire. Laſtly, whereas ſome of the ſame Religion with thoſe that did hatch the Powder-plot, are, and have been vehemently ſuſpected to have been the Incendiaries, by whoſe means *London* was burned, I earneſtly deſire that if time, and further diſcovery, be able to acquit them from any ſuch guilt that *Pillar* may record their Innocency and may make themſelves, *as an Iron Pillar or Brazen Wall*, (as I may allude to *Jer.* 1. 18.) againſt all the accuſations of thoſe that ſuſpect them, but if indeed, and in truth that Fire either came, or was carried on and continued by their treachery that the Inſcription of the Pillar may conſigne over their names to perpetual hatred and infamy.

Though I have thought too long already upon this ſubject; yet, me-thinks, I cannot but muſe yet a little further, How men will or ought to be affected with ſeeing that Pillar, and reading ſuch an Inſcription, as, I preſume will be made upon it. Will they not reflect and ſay, Alas! Is the greateſt part of a famous City come to this? (or rather was it brought to this?) What nothing but a brazen Pillar in lieu of the major part of a renowned City? Doleful exchange; As the Angel we read of *Matth.* 28. 6. told the Women that came to Chriſts Sepulchre, *He is not here, for he is riſen.* So this *Pillar* ſtands but to tell men, that a glorious City, that ſometimes ſtood

he e-

hereabouts, is not here now; for it (or moſt of it) is burnt and gone.

How uncomfortable is this in compariſon of the two Pillars we read of, *viz.* a Pillar of Cloud, and a Pillar of Fire, *Numb.* 14. 14. Thoſe were Pillars for direction, but this was in token of deſtruction. In thoſe God went before his people, by day and by night, but in the Fire, which occaſioned this Pillar, he came againſt us. Then was God to his people as a Shadow from the heat of the rage of their enemies, as a Wall of fire for their protection, but this Pillar calls that time to remembrance, in which God covered himſelf, as with a cloud, that the prayers of *Londoners* ſhould not paſſe unto him, and came forth, not as a conſerving, but a conſuming fire, not for, but againſt poor *London*. Surely the place, where that Pillar ſhall ſtand, will be made a *Bochim*, for who will be able to paſſe by it, and not ſhed ſome tears? Yet as woful tidings as that Pillar is to be charged with, How do I long to ſee it once erected (which if I never do, God grant that others may) for ſurely, that will never be done, till men can ſay of *London*, as the Prodigals Father of his converted Son. It (as he) *was dead, and is alive again, was loſt and is found.*

MEDITATION LIII.

Upon the Anniverſary Faſt appointed to be kept in remembrance of the Fire.

HOw do we play an after-game? *Yet better late than never*: What *Epimetheuſſes* are we? Now the City is burnt, we deſign to keep a perpetu-

al yearly Faſt, whereas there is little doubt, but the burning of it might have been prevented, if, before that judgement came, we had ſet ourſelves to keep ſuch a faſt, as is ſpoken of, Iſa. 58. 6. *Is not this the Faſt that I have choſen? to looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to undo the heavy burthens, and to let the oppreſſed go free, and that ye break every Yoke*, &c. The *Ninivites* were wiſer then we, for when *Jonah* preach't to them, that *within forty dayes* Nineveh *ſhould be overthrown*: They took that ſhort warning, *proclaimed a Faſt*, yea *and turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had ſaid he would do unto them*, Jonah 3. 10. We have now and then faſted after a ſort, but was it not ſo? that God might juſtly expoſtulate with us, as with the *Jews* of old, *Is it ſuch a Faſt as I have choſen? a day for a man to afflict his Soul: Wilt thou call this a Faſt, and an acceptable day to the Lord?* But have we turned from our evil wayes? as the Ninevites are ſaid to have done.

Preventing Faſts like preventing *Phyſick* are much the beſt, but when they have been omitted (or not obſerved (as they ought to be) which ſurely hath been our caſe) then curing or reſtoring Faſts (as I may call them) are exceeding neceſſary, as therapeutical or healing *Phyſick* is, where prophylactical or preventing remedies have not taken place.

A Faſt both Anniverſary and Perpetual is not without its preſident in ſcripture. The Jewes had ſuch a Faſt by Gods appointment, *Lev.* 16. 24. *This ſhall be a ſtatute for ever to you, that in the ſeventh month ye ſhall afflict your ſouls*, ver. 34. *This ſhall be an everlaſting Statute to you, to make an attonement for the Children of Iſrael for all their ſins*

once

once a year. So it is, that the *Jews* their Anniverſary Faſt, or day of Atonements, I ſay theirs and ours were and are both in the ſeventh month of the Year (reckoning *March* the firſt, as it is upon a civil accompt) and this, we know, came to paſſe not by humane deſignation, but by the determination of divine Providence, which brought the Fire in *September*; and it was but meet, that the Faſt, in relation to it, ſhould be in the ſame month, and on the ſame day the Fire was: Yea, poſſibly the zeal of *Eſther* (if ſuch a thing had hapned in her time) would have continued the Faſt as many dayes together, as the Fire it ſelf did continue; for we read that *She faſted three dayes and three nights* together, *Eſther* 4. 16. and it is probable would have held out one day longer, if ſo ſolemn an occaſion had called her to it.

How ſuitable it is that a Faſt ſhould be proclaimed upon ſuch an occaſion as this were eaſie to make appear. Faſts are a kind of Sabbaths, for *Moſes* ſpeaking of the *Jews* their Anniverſary Faſt, *Lev.* 16. 31. ſaith *It ſhall be a Sabbath of reſt unto you, and ye ſhall afflict your ſoules by a Statute for ever.* Now the City reſteth and injoyeth her Sabbaths in that doleful (if not ironicall) ſenſe, in which that phraſe is uſed, *Lev.* 26. 34. (*viz.* for a place that lieth deſolate) reaſon good that Citizens ſhould keep a Sabbath too, at leaſtwiſe every year, as that doth every day. When *London* lieth in aſhes, why ſhould not *Londoners* do ſo to? at leaſtwiſe for a ſeaſon: When God hath humbled the City to the very duſt, ſhould not Citizens, in like manner, humble their ſelves under his mighty hand:

Neither is it without reaſon and ſcripture that a perpetual Faſt ſhould be kept upon accompt of a tranſient

tranſient judgement (if I may call this tranſient) or that the Ages to come ſhould confeſſe and lament the ſins and miſeries of former times, or of the Ages that were before them. *Neh.* 9. 2. *They confeſſed their ſins and the iniquities of their Fathers*: and Dan. 9. 16. *For our ſins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, thy people are become a reproach.* There being Scripture for ſuch a practice, doubtleſs there is reaſon enough for it; yet I queſtion not, but a man may lawfully ask, What the reaſon is, or what cauſe can be aſſigned for our ſo doing? The moſt obvious Reaſons ſeem to reſult from the Love we owe to God, the Relation in which we ſtand to our Anceſtors and Forefathers, the Reverence which is due to the Judgements of God, and the bad influence which the ſins of our Anceſtors and Predeceſſors may have upon ourſelves in caſe we lay them not to heart. We are ſorry that thoſe whom we dearly love have been injured by others (and not then only when we have injured them ourſelves); yea, if we hear of any great wrong that was done them many years ago, we are troubled at it, and affected with it (though poſſibly not ſo much as if it were but yeſterday). And will not true love to God cauſe us in like manner to reſent the known injuries that have been done to him? (and ſuch are all the great violations of his Law) yea, though by others, and many years ſince. If thoſe that have wronged the perſons we love, were ſuch as were nearly related to ourſelves (as when *Saul*, that was *Jonathan*'s Father, was very unkind to *David*, whom himſelf had a great affection for) it troubleth us ſo much the more. So would love to God cauſe us to do, when thoſe from whoſe Loins we ſprang (or who are otherwiſe

wiſe near to us), have greatly provok'd him, to whom all by paſt things (though even worn out of the memory of men) are alwayes as preſent. By this Rule, though ſucceſsors ought to mourn over the ſins of their predeceſsors, yet Children more eſpecially over the ſins of their Parents, or Proparents, and other Relations one of another. We reverence not the Judgements of God as we ought, if hearing what God hath done to others for the ſame ſins whereof ourſelves are guilty (more or leſs) we do not both mourn, and tremble, and humble ourſelves before the Lord, leſt he ſhould do as much to us, as God ſaith to the Iſraelites, *Jer.* 7. 12, 14. *Go and ſee what I did to* Shiloh, *I will do unto this houſe as I did to* Siloh.

If ſuch conſiderations as theſe affect us not with the Sins and Judgements, which have gone over the heads of our Anceſtors in former times, then do we ourſelves become partakers of their ſins, and their ſins help to fill up the meaſure of ours: as we read *of the ſins of the Amorites not being yet full* (implying, that the ſins of the time preſent and time paſt, were thrown as it were into one meaſure); and as Chriſt ſpake to the perſecuting Jews, *Mat.* 23. 35. ſaying, *That upon them might come all the righteous blood, from the blood of* Abel *to the blood of* Zacharias. We read of God's *viſiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation*; and that he doth when they make them theirs, as by other means, ſo particularly by not mourning over them.

But if after-ages will not weep over the miſeries of this (which Hiſtory will not ſuffer them to be ignorant of), let them weep over their own loſses by this Fire: for I doubt not, but ſome may ſmart under

der the conſequences of it hundreds of years hence: foraſmuch as ſome Eſtates were conſumed by it, which might otherwiſe have been tranſmitted from Generation to Generation throughout ſeveral Ages to come. For ought I know, the fourth and fifth Generation from hence (to ſpeak within bounds) may have juſt cauſe, even from the influence this Judgment may have upon themſelves, to obſerve the ſecond of *September* as a ſolemne Faſt.

As for the good ends we may propound to ourſelves in obſerving that day as a Religious Faſt, they are ſo plain and viſible as that nothing can be more. Solemnly to humble ourſelves time after time, under this mighty hand of God, that may be one. To beg that God would build up the waſte places in his good time, that may be another: as alſo, that he would make a gracious proviſion for his impoveriſhed Servants: And laſtly, To deprecate the like Judgement for time to come; ſeveral of which ends, if I miſtake not, are hinted to us in the Act of Parliament.

But when I further conſider it, how ghaſtly are the thoughts of another Faſt? and that for Anniverſary perpetuity? Alas! how do Faſts multiply upon us? and the cauſes of them much more? --Sixty five gave us juſt occaſion for one perpetual Faſt, with reference to the dreadful Plague that was in that year, and --ſixty ſix by a no leſſe dreadful Fire, hath given us another. Thus ſin upon ſin, hath made work for Faſt after Faſt. And the truth is, ſo many and ſo great are our ſins at this day, that if God ſhould puniſh each of them with a particular and proportionable Judgement, and every ſuch Judgement ſhould be commemorated with

with an Anniverſary Faſt, the whole year might conſiſt of little elſe but Faſting-dayes: at leaſtwiſe all our Feſtivals be juſtled out, and all thoſe Letters be cloathed with Mourning, that were wont to be clad, (as it were) in Scarlet. Admit that *London* ſhould be built again, and ſwell to as great a bigneſs as it did before (the latter of which no perſon now living is like to ſee) yet even then there wil be found juſt cauſe of Faſting, Mourning, and Lamentation, for the burning of *London* in 1666. the prints and footſteps whereof will even then be viſible, though not by an outward deſolation, yet by an inward and leſs perceptible decay. Though *London* may in proceſs of time, come to look as well in the face as ever it did; yet it's inwards and vital parts will go nigh to remain greatly waſted and conſumed.

But after I have inſiſted ſo long upon the Sutableneſs, Congruity, and Reaſonableneſs of a yearly Faſt in Relation to the Fire: It is fit I declare my ſelf as to the nature and manner of the Faſt I wiſh for, and which only will ſtead us, *viz.* Such a Faſt as is ſpoken of, *Iſa.* 58. 6, 7. then may we hope to ſee ſuch a promiſe fulfilled as that, (of which we read) ver. 12. *And they that ſhall be of thee, ſhall build the old waſte places: thou ſhalt raiſe up the foundations of many generations, and thou ſhalt be called, The repairer of the breach, the reſtorer of paths to dwel in.*

MEDITATION LIV.

Upon the burning down of Zion-*Colledge.*

LOndon was an Epitome of *England* (if not alſo of the whole World.) In it was ſomething

of almoſt every thing; and amongſt the reſt, Colledges erected or deſigned for moſt kinds and parts of good Learning: only two of which I ſhall now inſtance in, *viz. Greſham* and *Zion*-Colledges. The former, which was to be for Divinity and other Sciences, yet ſtanding; the latter, which was intended only for Divines, and for Theology, now lying in the duſt. Doubtleſs, Learning is a great advantage and ſtay to Religion, as the Apoſtle himſelf intimateth, when he ſpeaks of ſome *who being ignorant and unlearned, do wreſt the Scriptures to their own deſtruction*; and if men (as much as in them is) would root Religion out of the world, they could uſe no means more effectual than that which *Julian* applied himſelf to, *viz.* the extinguiſhing of all good literature. This came to mind, when I remembred that Colledge to be yet ſtanding, where Divinity and other Sciences dwell together, though I am far from aſsigning that as the reaſon, why that Colledge rather than the other did eſcape the Fire.

But, my work is, to treat of thoſe places that did not eſcape, and now particularly of *Zion*-Colledge. The place where that Colledge ſtood, from the firſt time that I can receive any account of it, was alwayes a ſeat of Charity; firſt in the Oare (as I may call it) and afterwards refined. By Charity in the Ore, I mean, that which was popiſh and ſuperſtitious: For the firſt Foundation that I read of in that place was a Nunnery: After that, it was converted to an Hoſpital, in the year, 1332. for the relief of one hundred blind men, and was called the Priory or Hoſpital of Saint *Mary* the Virgin, founded by *William Elſing*, the which *William* became the firſt Prior there. In the ſame place where

where that Priory was ſituated, was ſince erected the Colledge I am ſpeaking of, for the Clergy of *London* and Liberties thereof, and for the ſuſtentation of twenty poor people, ten men and ten women.

An exemplary and well-contrived piece of Bounty and Charity was the founding of that Colledge, and the Alms-houſes thereunto belonging: Which I muſt needs ſpeak in praiſe of thoſe it's worthy Founders, whoſe Names ſhould alwayes live, though their Works be now demoliſhed.

Of the Charity that built that Colledge, and the Library belonging to it, I can ſay no leſs, than that it was, a Liberal, a Living, an Extenſive, an Humble, and a Handſome reſpectful Charity, and in all thoſe reſpects greatly Exemplary. That it was Liberal, appeareth by the quality of thoſe two Divines, that were the Founders of it, one of the Colledge its ſelf, *viz.* Doctor *Thomas White*, the other of the Library, *viz.* Maſter *John Simpſon*. All the preferment that I can find either of theſe Gentlemen had in and from the Church, was, that the former was Vicar of Saint *Dunſtans* in the Weſt, and one of the Canons reſidentiary of Saint *Paul*'s Church *London*; and the other, *viz.* Mr. *John Simpſon* was onely Rector of Saint *Olaves Hart-ſtreet*, *London*. Some men do a great deal of good with a little (the Church doth little for them, and yet they do much for it); others do but a little good with a great deal: Many, whoſe Titles and Eccleſiaſtical Revenues, have ſwelled ten times higher than either of theirs did, never were half ſo much Benefactors to the Church and world as was the leaſt of them; but have hoorded up their money, as if they meant, when they left the world, to take it with them.

And

And, as their Charity was liberal, (which I may call intenſive;) ſo was it no leſſe extenſive. Charity like ſeed, ſhould not all be ſown in one furrow, but ſcattered, ſome here ſome there; as the Scripture, ſpeaking of a good man, ſaith, *He hath diſperſed, he hath given to the poor, and his righteouſneſs remaineth:* I ſay, their Charity was extenſive, becauſe firſt, it did reach and extend to ſoul and body both; yea, I might have ſaid in the Apoſtles phraſe, Soul, Body, and Spirit: There was proviſion made for the bodies of ſo many poor; there were helps to Learning, whereby to accommodate the minds and ſouls of ſuch as were lovers of it; and laſtly, there was Religion, or rather helps to Religion, (by the promoting of Divinity,) for the ſpirits of men; by which I mean the ſublimer faculties of men, which are more eſpecially the ſeat and ſubjects of Religion. There was Charity ſhewed to both Sexes, ſo much to one as to another; whereas ſome Senſualliſts have no charity, but for that Sex which is not their own, (*Pharaoh*-like, who took care to ſave the females, though he gave charge to drown the males, as if they had been ſo many Mice:) And, certain Humoriſts on the other hand pretend to ſet their whole love upon their own Sex, profeſſing themſelves to be Miſogyniſts, or haters of Women; which, whether in pretence or in reality, is another ſinful extreme. Again, That Colledge was kind and Charitable, both to the Learned and Unlearned; as *Paul* ſaith, that *he was a Doctor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wiſe and to the fooliſh:* Whereas ſome, meer Schollars themſelves, have no love for any but Learned men: and, others again have a kind of Antipathy to Schollars, as ſuch. Laſtly, The extenſiveneſs

tensiveness of the Charity that gave that Colledge appeareth, in that it was a benefit both to Rich and Poor, (for, as to some things, those that are Rich may need help, as truly as those that are poor:) Thither might Persons of Quality, whose Libraries and usual Dwellings were in the Country, repair, and be furnished with those Books they could not meet with elsewhere.

An extensive Charity ought much to be imitated, because the Scripture saith, *Do good to all men*: And, one great fault of this Age, is, That the Charity of men, (like their respects,) is confined in some, only to *Paul*; in others, to *Cephas*; in others, to *Apollos*, (as I may allude:) but, the World will never be right, till men have learnt to love all good People as such.

On Mr. *Simpsons* part, who founded the Library, it was, as some call it, a Living-Charity; for, he built it in his life-time, at his own proper cost and charges: whereas some others have, in effect, said, That their Mony should go to good uses, when they had nothing else to do with it: then,) and not till then;) yea, possibly repented-of that too, ere they died. I have moreover called it an humble-Charity, (a *Charity that did not vaunt it self;*) because the aforesaid Founder of the Library did not scorn to build upon another mans Foundation, or to spend himself in adding to another mans Work; (who it was to be expected) would bear the name of the Principal Founder. Happy is he that can seek the good of others, and not seek his own honour at the same time; that, so others be benefited, doth not much care though himself be over-lookt.

Lastly, I said, It was a handsome, and a respectful piece of Charity, and so it was: For, How no-

ble a Treatment did the Founder provide quarterly for thoſe Miniſters ſucceſſively, for whoſe ſake chiefly, or for whoſe uſe, he built that Noble Colledge. Foraſmuch as he was pleaſed to give forty Pounds yearly for four Dinners for the Clergy, who were to Dine together in that Colledge, after they had broke their Faſt with a good *Latin* Sermon.

A ſcornfull Charity is (as our Proverb phraſeth it) but a bit and a knock; ſuch, as all ingenuous perſons, that can ſpare it, had as lief go without: but Charity, confer'd with reſpect, is like a Diamond well-ſet, or a Picture placed in ſuch a light, as ſheweth it to the beſt advantage: It is good milk, well ſweetned; whereas others, like our Proverb of the red-Cow, *Give good milk, and kick down part of it* again. All theſe things put together, methinks the Founders of that Colledg and Library, were noble Patterns of Charity; and therefore pitty it is, that their Colledge and their Names ſhould lie in aſhes together: that the latter ſhould not remain as famous as ever, though the former be taken away. The reſpect which Schollars owe to the memory of *Sion-Colledge*, for the kindneſs intended to them in it, as alſo for the good which many have received from it, (where ſome I preſume, got more Learning out of thoſe publick Books, than others did out of thoſe that were properly and peculiarly their own; Some throve upon the Common, better than others did upon their own rich Incloſures; ſome got more Learning for nothing, than others did out of coſtly Libraries of their own purchaſing: would not permit me to ſay leſs of it than I have ſaid; neither will I ſay much more concerning it.

Only one thing I muſt not fail to Obſerve, *viz.* That the Providence of God was pleaſed to watch over

over the greatest part of the Library belonging to that Colledge, and to save it from the Fire. At first, there was a Colledge without a Library, and afterwards a Library-House for some time without Books: Now, (thanks be to God,) there are Books good store, but neither Colledge nor Library to place them in: But, Shall it be alwayes so? Are there no more *Whites* and *Simpsons* to build another *Sion*-Colledge, with a Library to it, in the room of that which is burnt down? Methinks the very name of *Sion* should invite some good man, one, or more, to such a Work as that, having wherewithal to accomplish it; or, if it were but in part, to contribute towards it: Doth the present Age afford no man equal in Estate and Charity to the two former Founders of that Colledge? whereof one was but a Parson, the other but a Vicar. One would think there were a great many Persons that have double and treble, yea ten-fold that preferment and Revenue, that ever they had: But, if no body will do it, (as far be it from me, to think, the World is grown so bad, as bad as it is,) I shall be prone to think, that the generation that now is hath abandoned all care of Learning, Religion, and Charity, or of any thing else but what men should not care for.

MEDITATION LVI.

Upon Cittizens dwelling in Boothes, or Booth-like Houses since the Fire, as in Moor-Fields, *&c.*

WHat Wooden-Houses are those that many Cittizens of good fashion are now forced, yea glad, to dwell in? May we call them Houses? or are they any thing but Sheds, and Hovels, or Boothes, at most? Such as had wont to be set up

againſt *Bartholomew-Fair*, and took down again, when the *Fair* was ended: But now it is, as if ſome ſuch *Fair* as that, were continued all the year long. How are the Cittizens in *Moore-Fields* like an Army incamped, and lodging only within tents? How doth it bring to mind that feaſt of Tabernacles, Booths, or Bowers, which the Iſraelits were commanded to keep *Lev.* 23. 34. and that in the ſeventh month; it being alſo the ſeventh month (according to our accompt, beginning the year in *March*) which brought *Londoners* to this. The reaſon of obſerving the Feaſt of Tabernacles is ſet down, *Lev.* 23. 43. viz. *That your generations may know that I made the Children of Iſrael to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the Land of* Egypt. I ſuppoſe, it was in thankful acknowledgement, that, now they dwelt in houſes, they were much better accommodated than either themſelves or their Anceſtors were, when they dwelt in Booths.

Far beit from us to deſpair that *Londoners* in Gods good time may keep a Feaſt of Tabernacles in thankful remembrance that God, who ſometimes (as at this day) made them to dwell in Booths hath brought them to Houſes again; mean time, I wiſh they may be well contented with that ſmall convenience they enjoy and may conſider with themſelves, how much better it is to dwell in Tents (as it were) as now they do, than to lie in the open fields with only the Canopy of Heaven over their Heads (*ſub Dio, ſub Jove frigido*) as in the time of the fire many of them were conſtrained to do. *Jacobs* lodging was not ſo warm and ſo eaſy as is yours within thoſe tents, when he took ſtones for his pillows and ſlept upon them in the open air, and yet no night ever pleaſed him better, (as to the Dreams and Viſions of it): nor yet ſo much as that. From thence he

he ſaid of the place where he lay, *That 'tis the gate of Heaven, Gen.* 28. 17. Of the Stones that were his Pillows, he made a Pillar of Thankfulneſs, and poured Oil upon the top of it (I ſuppoſe by way of Thank-offering); and vowed a Vow, that if he came again in peace, that Pillar ſhould be God's Houſe, *ver.* 22. meaning, that he would build a Houſe for God in that place. How much better and more comfortable are ſuch Booths, than thoſe mountains, Dens, and Caves of the Earth, where the primitive Chriſtians were forced to hide themſelves? Yea, was not Chriſt himſelf worſe accommodated, when he lay but in a Manger? nay, doth not another Text ſay, that *The ſon of man* (ſometime) *had not where to lay his head?* It was a long time, that God himſelf dwelt amongſt the Iſraelites but in a Tent or Tabernacle, the Ark I mean, which was the viſible Symbol of Gods preſence amongſt the Jews, (and is ſomewhere called by the name of God): For, till *Solomon*'s time, there was no Houſe or Temple for God to dwell in. Shall men think much to dwell a few months or years in ſuch a way as God himſelf dwelt amongſt men for many ages together? *Is the ſervant greater than his Lord?*

Bleſs God that you have weathered out a ſharp Winter, in which you had cold lodging in thoſe thin paper-houſes (not much better Fences againſt wind and weather, than *Moſes* his Ark of Bull-ruſhes was againſt the water), and now a warm Summer is before you, in which thoſe ſlender Tabernacles may prove, not only tolerable, but pleaſant; and ſerve, as it were, for Country-houſes.

If men had had materials, as at other times, wherewith to have built ſtrong and durable habitations, where their booths now ſtand, they would

ſcarce have done it, becauſe they wait for a remove, and expect the good time when they may have opportunity, to dwell in or near the places where they dwelt before. Is there nothing to be learnt from thence? Why ſhould not all the proviſion we make for this World, be only ſuch, and ſo ſlender, as may argue us mindful, that *We have here no abiding City, but look for one to come, a City that hath Foundations, whoſe maker and builder is God?*

MEDITATION LVII.

Upon certain ſlight Timber-houſes that did eſcape the Fire, though better Houſes were burned on each ſide of them.

IT is plain, this Fire had a Commiſſion from above, what to take and what to leave, elſe it had never come to paſs, that thoſe houſes ſhould eſcape that were in moſt danger, *viz.* Slight, Old Timber-houſes, that were like ſo much tinder, (and ſome ſuch did eſcape) whilſt ſo many goodly Buildings and ſtately Fabricks, of Brick and Stone, (that ſeemed able to have made their own Defence) were conſumed by the Fire. It makes me think of Gods words to the Prophet *Jeremy*, 1. 18. *Behold, I have made thee a defenced City, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls againſt the whole Land. They ſhall fight againſt thee, but they ſhall not prevail againſt thee, for I am with thee, ver.* 19. Alas! What was one poor Prophet againſt ſo many Kings of *Judah*, Princes, Prieſts, and People (as is there expreſſed)? yet God ſaid, He would make him as a brazen Wall againſt them all: they ſhould not be able to prevail againſt him. So ſtood theſe poor Old-houſes, at a very ſmall diſtance from that Fire, which deſtroyed others at their right hand and at their left: they

ſtood

ſtood, I ſay, ſo ſecurely, under the wing of Divine Providence, as if they had been ſo many Iron Pillars or Walls of Braſs.

It calls to mind that paſſage, where the Prophet ſpeaking of God, ſaith, *That he giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaſeth ſtrength, Iſa.* 40. 29. To be ſure, thoſe houſes had no might or ſtrength of their own againſt ſuch a Fire; had it ſeized them, it would have made but a blaze of them, it would have ſwallowed them up quick, unleſs the great God had interpoſed, as he did on behalf of the three Children in the fiery Furnace. The preſervation of thoſe houſes, I reflect upon, not as if it were a Miracle, but as a very great wonder and demonſtration of Divine Providence. *Mira & Miracula*, that is, *Wonders and Miracles*, are uſually diſtinguiſhed. Miracles put Nature out of its courſe, as when the Sun was made to ſtand ſtill, the Red-ſea dried up, &c. but I cannot ſay, that in this caſe any ſuch thing was done. Poſſibly, the wind lay ſtill, or blew another way, at what time the Fire came near thoſe houſes: but, Who was it that called the wind into his treaſurie again, at that very time, or elſe appointed it to blow from another Coaſt? Was it not that Great God, who is ſaid, to ride upon the wings of the wind, and to make the Clouds his Chariots? and for that end (as may be meet for us to conceive) that he might convince the world, that all Safety and Danger is as he pleaſeth to make it, that he can expoſe thoſe things which ſeem to be moſt ſecure, and ſecure thoſe things which are moſt expoſed: Of this we have many Inſtances. In the time of the laſt great Plague, how many perſons were there infected with it, yea, and died of it, who, to all appearance, were out of harms way?

whereas others again, who lived as it were in the mouth of danger, and jaws of death (as namely in infected families, yea, some in Peſt-houſes) were preſerved, and are alive to this very day.

When the Arrows of God flew about, ſome ſtood (not knowing how to help it) as it were at the very mark, and yet it was the pleaſure of him that had the bow in his hand not to ſhoot them; others ſtood either wide of the Butt, or far beyond it, and yet a Dart ſtruck thorow their Liver: an invenomed Arrow took hold of them, and drunk up their Spirits. So it falls out in Spiritual things. How great was *Lot*'s danger in *Sodom*? (the very air of which place ſeemed to be infectious, as to matter of filthineſs) yet there he continued chaſte, how ſafe would one have thought him upon the Mountains (as for any ſuch matter); yet God leaving him there, he became inceſtuous with his own Daughters. The Almighty ſeemeth to take pleaſure, yea, and to glory in doing unlikely things. The Prophet, *Iſa.* 64.3. aſcribeth to *God terrible things, ſuch as men looked not for.* Having the iſſues of life and death in his hands, he ſo ordereth it many times for his own glory, that perſons notoriouſly weak and crazy ſhould hold out a long ſiege of diſtempers, yea, and overcome them at laſt (after ſeveral years of drooping) whereas others of *Sampſon*-like ſtrength (in compariſon of them) fall ſick, and die within a few days; So, weak Chriſtians (both as to grace and gifts) are many times kept unſpotted of the preſent world, and enabled to quench all the fiery darts of Sathan, whilſt ſome that excell them, both in gifts and graces, are ſometime left of God (in order to their greater humbling) to take ſhamefull falls, and for a time to be overcome of the evil one: witneſs *David* and others. So the ſoft Scabbard (much more in danger as one would think) oft-times

oft-times receiveth no hurt by lightning, whilſt the ſame lightning, paſſing thorough it, doth melt the Steel within. *Paul* obſerved by himſelf, that when he was weak, then he was ſtrong, meaning ſtronger or more ſtrengthned by God, than at other times: which words imply, that when he was ſtrongeſt to his own thinking, then was he really weaker than at other times, becauſe then he had leſs of the preſence of God with him. All theſe Inſtances are ſuch like things in effect, as was the preſervation of old timber-houſes, whilſt newer Buildings of Brick or Stone that ſtood near to them, were preſently demoliſhed.

It refreſheth me ſo much the more, to think, that all this came to paſs, without any thing of a Miracle; becauſe the working of *Miracles* we ought not to expect in theſe daves; nor can we, without preſumption, and tempting of God, pray to him, to ſuperſede, over-rule, or invert the courſe of Nature for our ſakes; but, to ſeek a wonder of God when need requires, is no preſumption or ſin at all: and the inſtance before us doth make evident, that Wonders may ſometime ſtead us as much as Miracles, even as the Houſes I am ſpeaking of, (as near to danger as they were,) were as effectually ſecured by God's either ſtilling or diverting the Wind, (in the very nick of time,) as they could have been by the working of the greateſt Miracle. We think, God muſt over-turn the courſe of Nature, if he would do this, and that, for us (as he ſpake of *Gods making windows in heaven*): Whereas himſelf, who is only wiſe, knows how to accompliſh what we deſire without uſing ſuch violent, extraordinary means. Be confident, the Lord knows how, togethe with every danger and *temptation, to make a way for eſcape*, and relie upon what

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is ſpoken, *Pſal.* 91.1. *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt high, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty*: and *let the Children of men put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings.*

MEDITATION LVIII.

Upon the Warning which other Places may, and ought to take by the Burning of London.

Londons downfall may Alarm all the World. As many bad People as were in it, let him, that can, point out that City in which there are more (ſo far as men can judg) that are truly good. If ten righteous perſons, yea, if fifty, yea, if ten times fifty, (to ſpeak within compaſs,) could have ſaved it, *London* had not been deſtroyed: There were more than a few Names within that *Sardis*, of ſuch as had not defiled their garments like others; Yet, it ſhould ſeem, not enow to weigh againſt the ſins of the reſt. Comparing *London* with other places, we may call it a Green-Tree; and, *If this were done to the green Tree, What ſhall be done to the dry? If Judgement begin at the Houſe of God, where ſhall the wicked and ungodly appear?*

I doubt not but there were ſins enow in *London* to deſerve the Judgment that did befall it, yea, and a greater than that; but, by the ſame reaſon, there is guilt enough in all other places to expoſe them to as great a deſolation. *Job* had ſins enow of his own to acquit God, in ſtripping him of all his earthly Comforts, and ſetting him upon a Dunghill to *ſcrape his ſores with potſheards*; yet *Job* had not, at that time, his fellow *in all the Eaſt-Countrey, for a man fearing God, and eſchewing evil*: ſo that God might as juſtly have done the ſame thing to any man

man of that age, as to him. Sins, comparatively ſmall, have ſometimes been branded with great Puniſhments; witneſs, *Davids numbering the People*, and *the Bethſhemites looking into the Ark*; poſſibly to ſhow, that little ſins are commenſurate with great Judgements, in point of evill, as a grain of ſome Poiſons may be as hurtful as a dram of others; ſo leſſer ſinners do ſometimes fall under heavy Judgements, to ſhow, that even they deſerve ſuch Scorpions as thoſe; and others, greater puniſhments; but that the patience of God extends to the reprieving of them for the preſent; as *Solomon* ſaid to *Abiathar*, *Thou art worthy to dye; but I will not put thee to death at this time*, 1 King. 2. 26.

Such as charge thoſe ſins upon *London*, which it was never guilty of, might have had more colour for ſo doing, if the Judgement had not fallen upon all ſorts of men, as well thoſe whom they think free from any ſuch guilt, as others, who were really free, though they do not think them ſo.

To ſpeak of *London*, as worſe than indeed it was, (that is, as worſe than other places;) is no other, than to beſpeak ſecurity in other places, and to prevent that warning which they ought to take, and which is indeed given them by the deſtruction of *London*. Who hath not reaſon to think, that other places ſhall likewiſe periſh, if they repent not? All my doubt concerning *London*, is, whether it were better than moſt other places proportionably to the mercies and means of grace, which it enjoyed above them; or whether, thoſe things conſidered, its ſins did not preponderate: but whether abſolutely conſidered, it did not more abound with people, of good and unblamable lives, then moſt other places do, I do not much queſtion, nor can I tell who doth.

Could

Could I be heard beyond the Seas, I would ſay, Let *Rome*, *Vienna*, *Venice*, *Madrid*, and *Paris*, take warning by the deſtruction of *London*, and repent betimes, as in duſt and aſhes, and (to keep within our own bounds), Let *Dublin*, and *Edenborough*, do ſo likewiſe; or (to come nearer home), Let *York*, *Briſtol*, *Norwich*, and all other Cities of *England* (now in being), meet the Lord in the way of his judgements, and ſeek to turn away his wrath, leſt they drink of the ſame Cup of trembling, whereof *London* hath drunk ſo deep, leſt God do unto them, as he hath done unto it (as he threatned of old to do to *Jeruſalem* as unto *Shiloh* *Jer.* 7. 14.) leſt *he rain fire and an horrible tempeſt upon them*, as he hath done upon that famous City; yea, leſt when *London* (having humbled its ſelf under the mighty hand of God) ſhall be reſtored and lifted up again (which we pray, and hope for) their doom ſhould be to ſucceed it in the ſame Calamity, under which it groaneth at this day: Which thing we ſhould all wiſh may be prevented as to each of them, by a Sincere and ſeaſonable Repentance.

FINIS.